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THE
NECESSITY, NATURE, AND FRUITS,
OF
SANCTIFICATION:

IN
A SERIES OF LETTERS TO A FRIEND.

BY NATHAN BANGS, D. D.

This is the will of God, even your sanctification.—1 THESS. iv, 3.

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EMMANUEL

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P R E F A C E.

THE reasons which induce me to publish the following letters in this form are—

1. That I wrote them under a deep sense of duty, being led on, as I then thought, and still think, by the spirit of truth and love; so much so, that my heart was continually warmed with the fire of Divine love, and expanded with an enlarged desire that others might participate with me in the same inestimable blessing. Under the same impression I have revised them, and now send them forth in this more permanent form.

2. The friend to whom they were addressed had, as is expressed in one of the following letters, frequently requested my views on the subject; and thinking that I might address her in such a manner as, at the same time, to edify others who were similarly situated, or who might be seeking after the blessing of entire sanctification, I concluded to address her thus pub-

licly, for I had no secret understanding with her but what I was perfectly willing should be known and read of all men; nor had she seen a word of what I had written until it appeared in print. Neither am I conscious of having given utterance to a thought which is incompatible with the dictates of the purest Christian affection, and that holy fellowship which subsists among all the devoted followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, who prayed that his disciples might all be one, even as he was one with the Father. I have, indeed, no sympathy with those whose religion is of that cold, speculative character, that does not enter into the heart and move the affections, and who cannot therefore appreciate that intercommunion of spirits which is realized by those hearts that are linked together in the chain of friendship, forged in heaven and polished by the Holy Spirit. I thank God that I have many such, both male and female, with whom, as the Psalmist says, "is all my delight," and with whom, therefore, I may hold fellowship; and I joyfully anticipate the bright era, when I may spend an eternity with them around the holy throne in praising God and the Lamb forever; and among those, I frankly confess, is the one to whom the following letters are addressed.

Many have asked for whom M. stands. My uniform answer has been, that is a secret which I shall reveal to no one; nor has any a right to apply it to one person more than another without any authority from me, or any one else that I know of; and therefore all such applications are wholly gratuitous, and may pass for what they are worth. If any persons, however, think that they can, from what is said in the letters, select the individual, I have only to say that that is a mark greatly in her favour; and permit me to add, that it fully justifies me in selecting one so worthy of my confidence, that those who know her fully recognize the traits of her character, from the identity of the living person with the hints given in the letters. The fact is, the letters were written for all whom they suit; for they were designed not merely for the benefit of an individual, but for all whom the Lord our God shall call to a holy life and conversation, being composed under a deep sense of high responsibility to Him, and with a view to assist all those who may be seeking an entire sanctification of soul and body to Him, or to confirm and strengthen those who have already attained that blessing.

Moreover, I had other reasons for adopting this method of writing. By adopting the episto-

lary style, I could the more easily familiarize myself with the heart, adapt myself to the views and feelings of each individual, and thus make every attentive reader feel as if he or she were himself or herself addressed. On this account I adopted, of set purpose, this more familiar style of writing, hoping it might catch the attention of those who would turn away from a more formal, didactic mode of conveying instruction to the understanding; and I have reason to believe that this end has, in some measure at least, been accomplished.

3. My object in quoting so many verses of our most excellent Hymns, was, that I might bring those deeply spiritual compositions as impressively as possible to the reader's heart. For though the Hymn-book is used in all our worshipping assemblies, and it is to be hoped is found in all our families, it is feared, nevertheless, that many of the hymns are seldom, if ever, studied or sung, more especially those of particular metres; and these are the most poetical, deeply experimental, and spiritual, and speak most emphatically on the theme of perfect love, of any in the collection. And how any experimental Christian, who has a correct poetical taste, and at the same time relishes the doctrine contended for in these letters, can pre-

fer Watts, Toplady, Montgomery, or any other Christian poet, to Charles Wesley, I am at a loss to conceive. I do not wish to undervalue, much less to speak slightingly of these poets, nor of any others of equal merit. To most of their hymns we may ascribe a high degree of excellence, and Watts, especially, is a smooth versifier, and a poet of more than common power and beauty, to whom the Christian Church is under a lasting debt of gratitude for furnishing her with so many excellent spiritual songs; but when compared to Charles Wesley, he falls many degrees below him, and his light disappears like the stars before the mid-day sun, particularly when the latter dips his pen in the flowing fountain of perfect love, the refreshing streams of which so profusely water the garden of the Lord. On this subject Charles Wesley has no equal. Here he stands alone, unrivalled in the fertile field of sanctifying grace; and as he walks through it, he plucks the beautiful flowers of heavenly poesy, and scatters them, fresh and fair, profusely all around him, perfuming the air with their sweet odour, while the heart is filled with the most delightful melody—when the tongue sings the praise of Immanuel in the poetical strains furnished by this bard of Methodism. The Methodist Church ought

to praise God most heartily for raising up a poet who has furnished her with a set of psalmody so admirably adapted to every state and condition of the human heart.

As to the contemptible ditties found in Camp-meeting Hymn-books, Zion's Songsters, and other kindred publications, though there may be now and then a hymn of decent character, I pity the man or woman that can prefer and use these compositions, most of which possess neither poetry, sense, nor piety, to those highly poetical, deeply experimental, and spiritual hymns, of Charles Wesley—that can substitute the nonsensical rhymings, with their almost endless repetition of the same words, for those characterized by chastened language and Scriptural sentiments found in the hymns of Charles Wesley, and especially which speak of those heights and depths of sanctifying love.

I said that I feared that these Divine Hymns are seldom studied or sung. Indeed, I scarcely ever hear any of them given out in the congregation, but only either a long, common, or short metre, which, though good enough in their place, have been repeated over and over again, until they have become almost stale—like the dull prayer of the formalist, which dwells on the tongue without springing from the heart,

and has been so often repeated, that the hearer knows beforehand what is to come next—while such hymns as the following are entirely neglected :—

O God of our forefathers, hear,
And make thy faithful mercies known ;
To Thee, through Jesus, we draw near,
Thy suffering, well-beloved Son,
In whom thy smiling face we see,
In whom thou art well pleased with me.

With solemn faith we offer up,
And spread before thy glorious eyes,
That only ground of all our hope,
That precious, bleeding sacrifice,
Which brings thy grace on sinners down,
And perfects all our souls in one.

Acceptance through his only name,
Forgiveness in his blood we have ;
But more abundant life we claim,
Through Him who died our souls to save ;
To sanctify us by thy blood,
And fill with all the life of God.

Father, behold thy dying Son,
And hear the blood that speaks above !
On us let all thy grace be shown ;
Peace, righteousness, and joy, and love !
Thy kingdom come to every heart,
And all thou hast, and all thou art.

I wished, therefore, and still most devoutly wish, to bring those hymns vividly before the reader's mind ; to press their high importance and deep meaning upon his inmost soul, that he may appreciate their great excellence, taste their unrivalled beauty, and feel, in the depths

of his heart, their holy influence. By familiarizing himself with their sound theological sentiments, and thus treasuring in his memory and heart these rich truths of Divine revelation, he will become thoroughly imbued with their spirit, and will be influenced by their holy teaching, provided only that he drink from the same fountain of redeeming and sanctifying love from which the poet drank.

So long as these hymns are patronized by the Church, sung in the congregations, and rehearsed in the families, and the truths they teach are made subjects of experimental verity, so long will orthodox doctrine, a true poetical taste, a sound Christian experience, and a regular practice of piety, be preserved among us; while the hymns will continue to adorn, enrich, and bless both ministers and people.

4. I was well aware that many of our preachers and people had become lukewarm, to say no more of it, upon the subject of entire sanctification. For though it is a prominent doctrine of our Church, taught by all our standard writers, Wesley, Fletcher, Clarke, and others, yet, from my intercourse with them, I found many that appeared quite indifferent respecting it, while a few manifested a decided hostility to the doctrine of entire sanctification; and although

I could not hope to add much new light to what had been shed upon it by those able divines, yet I thought I could revive the doctrine in their recollection, by first giving a synopsis of what Wesley had written ; and then, secondly, I might stir up their minds, by way of remembrance, by the use of some arguments which had not been employed by others,—obviate some new objections ; and thus contribute my mite towards advancing the cause of Christian holiness, or bring one additional stone with which to complete the edifice, or at least to drive one more nail in a sure place. How far I succeeded, the reader must judge,—but I must beg him to judge impartially as well as charitably ; and, in the mean time, to pray earnestly for the writer, that he may experience largely of that sanctifying grace which he recommends to others.

5. I wish to leave behind me a faithful and decided testimony in favour of this grand doctrine of the gospel—this provision of the Christian system, that it may speak for me when I am dead and gone. And as I cannot hope to continue much longer in this world, whatever I may say, or do, or write, must be said, or done, or written soon, or not at all ; and therefore I feel it an imperative duty to commit this work

to the press with all practical speed, that this written testimony may be left behind me for the benefit of my children, and all others who may condescend to read what I have written. They will here find my most matured thoughts upon one of the most vital truths of Divine revelation.

For upon a review and revision of these letters, I have left neither a sentence nor a word that I would wish either altered or erased. They all, indeed, express the thoughts of my heart, resulting from my most deliberate judgment, made up in the fear of God, from a calm consideration of the Holy Scriptures, the experience and testimonies of God's children, and in view of the judgment day! If I do not misinterpret the promptings of my own heart, I think I can say that in these letters I have expressed its genuine sentiments of affectionate attachment to all those who "love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and also love one another with a pure heart fervently"—the whole springing from the "love of God spread abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost."

I know, indeed, that this profession will subject me to the severity of criticism; but I cannot well avoid it; for if I were to withhold this testimony in favour of the abundant grace of

God in Christ, vouchsafed to a sinner like myself, "the stones," the stony hearts of sinners, "would cry out against me." I am, moreover, justified in thus proclaiming the goodness of God by most of the inspired writers, both under the Old and New dispensations, and by all the holy men of God in every age of the Church, who have all said in substance, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and we will declare what he hath done for our souls." I wish therefore to say, to the honour of God's grace in Christ Jesus, that I feel under an infinite debt of gratitude to him for what he has done, and still does for me, the chief of sinners, that thus I may contribute my mite towards erecting a monument to the glory of that God who has so "loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son," that "all men, through him, might be saved" "with an endless life;" and that on this monument may be inscribed, in legible characters, as the sincere breathings of my soul to God, the following words:—

"Thy witness with my spirit bear,
That God, my God, inhabits there ;
Thou, with the Father and the Son,
Eternal life's co-eval beam,
Be Christ in me, and I in him,
Till perfect we are made in one."

6. Many who have read those of the letters

published in the Christian Advocate and Journal, have expressed a wish to see them embodied in a book. While I do this, therefore, I both gratify the desires of all such, and satisfy the dictates of my own conscience.

To the letters which have already appeared in the Advocate, I have added five others ; the first, on the superior qualifications of the sanctified to get and to do good ; the second, on their death ; the third, on their resurrection ; the fourth, on their different degrees of glory ; the fifth, on their happiness in heaven—pursuing the same plan and style of writing as in the previous letters.

I have nothing more to add, except my most fervent prayer to God, that He, in his infinite love, may send his choicest blessings upon this sincere effort to promote his glory in the complete salvation of immortal souls.

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LETTERS ON SANCTIFICATION.

LETTER I.

The object proposed in quoting from Wesley—Time too precious to dispute about words—What Mr. Wesley proposes—Historical account of his experience—Reads Bishop Taylor—Kemps—Law—Studies the Bible—His first sermon—Quotations from his poetry—From a German divine—Further quotations from his Hymns.

MY DEAR M——: That you may be more thoroughly established in the doctrine of sanctification, I will furnish you, in the first place, with Mr. Wesley's views upon the subject, and likewise the means he used to promote holiness of heart and life. I do this the rather, because he is the best interpreter of his own doctrine, and, more especially, because there never was an uninspired writer who touched this subject with such clearness, explained it so perspicuously, scripturally, experimentally, and practically, and defended it more masterly, than did John Wesley. I quote from his works, Vol. VI, page 483, because this contains his last revision of his "Plain Account of Christian Perfection," and gives an historical sketch of the several

steps by which he was led on in the pursuit of holiness.

By thus giving the extracts which I shall make, thousands may read them who cannot, or will not, have access to his views as contained in his works, and will thereby be enabled to see, and duly to weigh, what that great man of God has said upon this all-important subject ; and above all, I hope they will be induced to seek after it—to seek after it in such a manner as to be able to test its truth and sweetness by their own heartfelt experience.

Let us not dispute about words. Time is too precious, the work itself is too important, too nearly related to our present and eternal interests, to waste our moments in idle disputes about mere speculative points of doctrine, only so far as they may have an experimental and practical bearing upon our hearts and lives. I think I never felt the vast importance of this view of the subject more, if, indeed, as much as I do at present, and I feel such an eagerness to press it, both upon myself and all my readers, that I can hardly refrain from crying aloud to all within the hearing of my voice, or rather to all who shall read what I may write, instantly to come to the living fountain, and drink of the flowing waters of life, wash them in the ocean

of Divine love, praying, in the language of our own inimitable poet,

“ Wash me, but not my feet alone,—
My hands, my head, my heart.”

So deeply does this subject press itself upon my heart, that I feel almost resolved to say that it shall be my *only*—and I will venture to say, my *principal*—theme the remainder of my short but unprofitable life.

But to Mr. Wesley's views, from which I have kept you too long. In Vol. VI, p. 483, he gives a consecutive account of the manner in which he was led into this subject, as well as the times and way in which he treated it, in the following words :—

1. What I purpose in the following papers is, to give a plain and distinct account of the steps by which I was led, during a course of many years, to embrace the doctrine of Christian perfection. This I owe to the serious part of mankind, those who desire to know all “the truth as it is in Jesus.” And these only are concerned in questions of this kind. To these I would nakedly declare the thing as it is, endeavouring all along to show, from one period to another, both what I thought, and why I thought so.

2. In the year 1725, being in the twenty-third year of my age, I met with Bishop Taylor's “Rule and Exercises of Holy Living and Dying.” In reading several parts of this book, I was exceedingly affected; that part in particular which relates to purity of intention. In-

stantly I resolved to dedicate all my life to God, all my thoughts, and words, and actions; being thoroughly convinced there was no medium; but that every part of my life (not some only) must either be a sacrifice to God or myself, that is, in effect, to the devil.

Can any serious person doubt of this, or find a medium between serving God and serving the devil?

3. In the year 1726, I met with Kempis's "Christian's Pattern." The nature and extent of inward religion, the religion of the heart, now appeared to me in a stronger light than ever it had done before. I saw, that giving even all my life to God (supposing it possible to do this, and go no farther) would profit me nothing, unless I gave my heart, yea, all my heart to him.

I saw, that "simplicity of intention, and purity of affection," one design in all we speak or do, and one desire ruling all our tempers, are indeed "the wings of the soul," without which she can never ascend to the mount of God.

4. A year or two after, Mr. Law's "Christian Perfection" and "Serious Call" were put into my hands. These convinced me, more than ever, of the absolute impossibility of being half a Christian; and I determined, through his grace, (the absolute necessity of which I was deeply sensible of,) to be all devoted to God, to give him all my soul, my body, and my substance.

Will any considerate man say, that this is carrying matters too far? or that anything less is due to Him who has given himself for us, than to give him ourselves, all we have, and all we are?

5. In the year 1729, I began not only to read, but to study, the Bible, as the one, the only standard of truth, and the only model of pure religion. Hence I saw, in a clearer and clearer light, the indispensable necessity

of having "the mind which was in Christ," and of "walking as Christ also walked;" even of having, not some part only, but all the mind which was in him; and of walking as he walked, not only in many or in most respects, but in all things. And this was the light, wherein at this time I generally considered religion, as a uniform following of Christ, an entire inward and outward conformity to our Master. Nor was I afraid of anything more, than of bending this rule to the experience of myself, or of other men; of allowing myself in any the least disconformity to our grand Exemplar.

6. On January 1, 1733, I preached before the university, in St. Mary's Church, on "the Circumcision of the Heart;" an account of which I gave in these words: "It is that habitual disposition of soul which, in the sacred writings, is termed holiness; and which directly implies, the being cleansed from sin, 'from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit;' and, by consequence, the being endued with those virtues which were in Christ Jesus; the being so 'renewed in the image of our mind,' as to be 'perfect, as our Father in heaven is perfect.'" (Vol. i, p. 148.)

In the same sermon I observed, "'Love is the fulfilling of the law, the end of the commandment.' It is not only 'the first and great' command, but all the commandments in one. 'Whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise,' they are all comprised in this one word, love. In this is perfection, and glory, and happiness: the royal law of heaven and earth is this, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.' The one perfect good shall be your one ulti-

mate end. One thing shall ye desire for its own sake,—the fruition of Him who is all in all. One happiness shall ye propose to your souls, even a union with him that made them, the having ‘fellowship with the Father and the Son,’ the being ‘joined to the Lord in one spirit.’ One design ye are to pursue to the end of time,—the enjoyment of God in time and in eternity. Desire other things, so far as they tend to this; love the creature, as it leads to the Creator. But in every step you take, be this the glorious point that terminates your view. Let every affection, and thought, and word, and action, be subordinate to this. Whatever ye desire or fear, whatever ye seek or shun, whatever ye think, speak, or do, be it in order to your happiness in God, the sole end, as well as source, of your being.”—(*Ib.* pp. 150, 151.)

I concluded in these words: “Here is the sum of the perfect law, the circumcision of the heart. Let the spirit return to God that gave it, with the whole train of its affections. Other sacrifices from us he would not, but the living sacrifice of the heart hath he chosen. Let it be continually offered up to God through Christ, in flames of holy love. And let no creature be suffered to share with him: for he is a jealous God. His throne will he not divide with another; he will reign without a rival. Be no design, no desire admitted there, but what has him for its ultimate object. ‘This is the way wherein those children of God once walked, who being dead still speak to us: ‘Desire not to live but to praise his name; let all your thoughts, words, and works, tend to his glory.’ ‘Let your soul be filled with so entire a love to him, that you may love nothing but for his sake.’ ‘Have a pure intention of heart, a steadfast regard to his glory in all your actions.’ ‘For then, and not till then, is *that* mind in us, which was also in Christ Jesus,

when in every motion of our heart, in every word of our tongue, in every work of our hands, we pursue nothing but in relation to him, and in subordination to his pleasure;’ when we too neither think, nor speak, nor act, to fulfil ‘our own will, but the will of Him that sent us;’ when, ‘whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do,’ we do it all ‘to the glory of God.’”—(*Ib.*, p. 153.)

It may be observed, this sermon was composed the first of all my writings which have been published. ‘This was the view of religion I then had, which even then I scrupled not to term *perfection*.’ This is the view I have of it now, without any material addition or diminution. And what is there here, which any man of understanding, who believes the Bible, can object to? What can he deny, without flatly contradicting the Scriptures? what retrench, without taking from the word of God!

7. In the same sentiment did my brother and I remain (with all those young gentlemen in derision termed *Methodists*) till we embarked for America, in the latter end of 1735. It was the next year, while I was at Savannah, that I wrote the following lines:—

Is there a thing beneath the sun,
That strives with thee my heart to share?
Ah! tear it thence, and reign alone,
The Lord of every motion there!

In the beginning of the year 1738, as I was returning from thence, the cry of my heart was,

O grant that nothing in my soul
May dwell, but thy pure love alone!
O may thy love possess me whole,
My joy, my treasure, and my crown!
Strange fires far from my heart remove;
My every act, word, thought, be love!

I never heard that any one objected to this. And indeed who can object? Is not this the language, not only of every believer, but of every one that is truly awakened? But what have I wrote, to this day, which is either stronger or plainer?

8. In August following, I had a long conversation with Arvid Gradin, in Germany. After he had given me an account of his experience, I desired him to give me, in writing, a definition of "the full assurance of faith," which he did in the following words:—

Requies in sanguine Christi; firma fiducia in Deum, et persuasio de gratiâ divinâ; tranquillitas mentis summa, atque serenitas et pax; cum absentiâ omnis desiderii carnalis, et cessatione peccatorum etiam internorum.

"Repose in the blood of Christ; a firm confidence in God, and persuasion of his favour; the highest tranquillity, serenity, and peace of mind, with a deliverance from every fleshly desire, and a cessation of all, even inward sins."

This was the first account I ever heard from any living man, of what I had before learned myself from the oracles of God, and had been praying for, (with the little company of my friends,) and expecting, for several years.

9. In 1739, my brother and I published a volume of "Hymns and Sacred Poems." In many of these we declared our sentiments strongly and explicitly. So page 24,—

Turn the full stream of nature's tide;
 Let all our actions tend
 To thee, their source; thy love the guide,
 Thy glory be the end.

Earth then a scale to heaven shall be ;
Sense shall point out the road ;
The creatures all shall lead to thee,
And all we taste be God.

Again,—

Lord, arm me with thy Spirit's might,
Since I am call'd by thy great name ;
In thee my wand'ring thoughts unite,
Of all my works be thou the aim :
Thy love attend me all my days,
And my sole business be thy praise. (p. 122.)

Again,—

Eager for thee I ask and pant,
So strong the principle divine
Carries me out with sweet constraint,
Till all my hallow'd soul be thine ;
Plunged in the Godhead's deepest sea,
And lost in thine immensity ! (p. 125.)

Once more,—

Heavenly Adam, life divine,
Change my nature into thine ;
Move and spread throughout my soul,
Actuate and fill the whole. (p. 153.)

It would be easy to cite many more passages to the same effect. But these are sufficient to show, beyond contradiction, what our sentiments then were.

You may expect, my dear M., some further extracts from Mr. Wesley, interspersed with such remarks as may be considered expedient to give a clear view of the subject, and to urge it home upon the conscience, so as, if any way practicable, to make you feel and duly appreciate its vast importance.

LETTER II.

Methods of promoting the work—Many made partakers of the blessing of sanctification—Reproach followed—The work goes on—Judicious counsel—Enthusiasts withstood—Queries humbly proposed—His success—Object not controversy, but to promote the work of holiness.

MY DEAR M—— : I will now show some of the methods adopted by Mr. Wesley, in order to promote the work of holiness or sanctification among his people. In the first place, he constantly preached it, urging its indispensable necessity to fit them for an acceptable and efficient service of God here, and for the consummation of glory hereafter. In this work all the preachers in connexion with him, as well as several clergymen of the Establishment, heartily united, all speaking the same language, all exhorting the people to seek after the same inestimable blessing. To effect the work the more perfectly, Mr. Wesley was in the habit of examining those who professed to enjoy this blessing personally, and of carefully guarding them against any false or erroneous views respecting it.

After giving a consecutive account of the manner in which the doctrine had been dis-

cussed at various conferences, from 1742 to 1760, he says:—

In the year 1762, there was a great increase of the work of God in London. Many, who had hitherto cared for none of these things, were deeply convinced of their lost estate; many found redemption in the blood of Christ; not a few backsliders were healed; and a considerable number of persons believed that God had saved them from all sin. Easily foreseeing that Satan would be endeavouring to sow tears among the wheat. I took much pains to apprize them of the danger, particularly with regard to pride and enthusiasm. And while I stayed in town, I had reason to hope they continued both humble and sober-minded. But almost as soon as I was gone, enthusiasm broke in. Two or three began to take their own imaginations for impressions from God, and thence to suppose that they should never die; and these, labouring to bring others into the same opinion, occasioned much noise and confusion. Soon after, the same persons, with a few more, ran into other extravagances; fancying they could not be tempted; that they should feel no more pain; and that they had the gift of prophecy, and of discerning of spirits. At my return to London, in autumn, some of them stood reprov'd; but others were got above instruction. Meantime, a flood of reproach came upon me almost from every quarter; from themselves, because I was checking them on all occasions; and from others, because, they said, I did not check them. However, the hand of the Lord was not stayed, but more and more sinners were convinced; while some were almost daily converted to God, and others enabled to love him with all their heart.

About this time, a friend at some distance from London wrote to me as follows :—

“Be not over alarmed that Satan sows tares among the wheat of Christ. It ever has been so, especially on any remarkable outpouring of his Spirit; and ever will be so, till he is chained up for a thousand years. Till then he will always ape, and endeavour to counteract, the work of the Spirit of Christ.

“One melancholy effect of this has been, that a world which is always asleep in the arms of the evil one, has ridiculed every work of the Holy Spirit.

“But what can real Christians do? Why, if they would act worthy of themselves, they should, (1.) Pray that every deluded soul may be delivered; (2.) Endeavour to reclaim them in the spirit of meekness; and, lastly, take the utmost care, both by prayer and watchfulness, that the delusion of others may not lessen their zeal in seeking after that universal holiness of soul, body, and spirit, ‘without which no man shall see the Lord.’

“Indeed, this complete new creature is mere madness to a mad world. But it is, notwithstanding, the will and wisdom of God. May we all seek after it!

“But some who maintain this doctrine in its full extent are too often guilty of limiting the Almighty. He dispenses his gifts just as he pleases; therefore, it is neither wise nor modest to affirm that a person must be a believer for any length of time before he is capable of receiving a high degree of the Spirit of holiness.

“God’s usual method is one thing, but his sovereign pleasure is another. He has wise reasons both for hastening and retarding his work. Sometimes he comes suddenly, and unexpected; sometimes, not till we have long looked for him.

"Indeed, it has been my opinion for many years, that one great cause why men make so little improvement in the divine life is their own coldness, negligence, and unbelief. And yet I here speak of believers.

"May the Spirit of Christ give us a right judgment in all things, and 'fill us with all the fulness of God;' that so we may be 'perfect and entire, wanting nothing.'"

About the same time, five or six honest enthusiasts foretold that the world was to end on the 28th of February. I immediately withstood them, by every possible means, both in public and private. I preached expressly upon the subject, both at West-street and Spitalfields. I warned the society, again and again, and spoke severally to as many as I could; and I saw the fruit of my labour. They made exceeding few converts: I believe scarce thirty, in our whole society. Nevertheless they made abundance of noise, gave huge occasion of offence to those who took care to improve to the uttermost every occasion against me, and greatly increased both the number and courage of those who opposed Christian perfection.

Some questions now published by one of these, induced a plain man to write the following—

"*Queries*, humbly proposed to those who deny perfection to be attainable in this life.

"(1.) Has there not been a larger measure of the Holy Spirit given under the Gospel, than under the Jewish dispensation? If not, in what sense was the Spirit not given before Christ was glorified? John vii, 39.

"(2.) Was that 'glory which followed the sufferings of Christ,' 1 Peter i, 11, an external glory, or an internal, namely, the glory of holiness?

"(3.) Has God anywhere in Scripture commanded us more than he has promised to us?

“(4.) Are the promises of God respecting holiness to be fulfilled in this life, or only in the next ?

“(5.) Is a Christian under any other laws than those which God promises to ‘write in our hearts?’ Jer. xxxi, 31, &c.; Heb. viii, 10.

“(6.) In what sense is ‘the righteousness of the law fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit?’ Rom. viii, 4.

“(7.) Is it impossible for any one in this life to ‘love God with all his heart, and mind, and soul, and strength?’ And is the Christian under any law which is not fulfilled in this love ?

“(8.) Does the soul’s going out of the body effect its purification from indwelling sin ?

“(9.) If so, is it not something else, not ‘the blood of Christ, which cleanseth’ it ‘from all sin?’

“(10.) If his blood cleanseth us from all sin, while the soul and body are united, is it not in this life ?

“(11.) If when that union ceases, is it not in the next ? And is not this too late ?

“(12.) If in the article of death ; what situation is the soul in, when it is neither in the body nor out of it ?

“(13.) Has Christ anywhere taught us to pray for what he never designs to give ?

“(14.) Has he not taught us to pray, ‘Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven?’ And is it not done perfectly in heaven ?

“(15.) If so, has he not taught us to pray for perfection on earth ? Does he not then design to give it ?

“(16.) Did not St. Paul pray according to the will of God, when he prayed that the Thessalonians might be ‘sanctified wholly, and preserved’ (in this world, not the next, unless he was praying for the dead)

'blameless in body, soul, and spirit, unto the coming of Jesus Christ?'

"(17.) Do you sincerely desire to be freed from indwelling sin in this life?

"(18.) If you do, did not God give you that desire?

"(19.) If so, did he not give it you to mock you, since it is impossible it should ever be fulfilled?

"(20.) If you have not sincerity enough even to desire it, are you not disputing about matters too high for you?

"(21.) Do you ever pray God to 'cleanse the thoughts of your heart, that you 'may perfectly love him?'

"(22.) If you neither desire what you ask, nor believe it attainable, pray you not as a fool prayeth?

"God help thee to consider these questions calmly and impartially!"

These extracts show that the soul of Mr. Wesley was absorbed in this subject, and that by his assiduity in labouring to promote it, guarding the doctrine against all extravagances on the one hand, and exciting all believers, on the other, to seek it with all diligence, he was abundantly successful—many witnesses were raised up who were able to testify to its truth from their own heartfelt experience.

I shall endeavour to give some further extracts bearing upon this point in my next. In the mean time, permit me to premonish you, my dear M., that my object is not to provoke controversy, but, if possible, to incite you, and all

who read what I write, to wrestle in earnest prayer, and in the exercise of strong faith, that you and they may be made partakers of this great and invaluable blessing—the blessing of “perfect love.”

LETTER III.

Both gradual and instantaneous—When may a person conclude himself sanctified?—Gradually dying, yet dies in an instant—How to wait for it—May enjoy peace until we find it—Justification and sanctification two separate blessings—Proved from Scripture—The justified soul set apart for God’s service—Exhortation to search diligently.

MY DEAR M—— : Some have expressed doubts respecting the possibility of attaining to this great blessing in a moment, and are strongly inclined to believe that it is entirely a gradual work; that from the time a sinner is justified freely by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, he gradually dies unto sin and proportionately grows in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, until God takes him from earth to heaven. That this is not according to Mr. Wesley’s view of the subject is most evident, as the following extracts will show :—

“ Q. When may a person judge himself to have attained this ?

“ A. When, after having been fully convinced of inbred sin, by a far deeper and clearer conviction than

that he experienced before justification, and after having experienced a gradual mortification of it, he experiences a total death to sin, and an entire renewal in the love and image of God, so as to rejoice evermore, to pray without ceasing, and in everything to give thanks. Not that 'to feel all love and no sin' is a sufficient proof. Several have experienced this for a time before their souls were fully renewed. None therefore ought to believe that the work is done, till there is added the testimony of the Spirit, witnessing his entire sanctification, as clearly as his justification.

"Q. But whence is it, that some imagine they are thus sanctified, when in reality they are not ?

"A. It is hence ; they do not judge by all the preceding marks, but either by part of them, or by others that are ambiguous. But I know no instance of a person attending to them all, and yet deceived in this matter. I believe there can be none in the world. If a man be deeply and fully convinced, after justification, of inbred sin ; if he then experience a gradual mortification of sin, and afterward an entire renewal in the image of God ; if to this change, immensely greater than that wrought when he was justified, be added a clear, direct witness of the renewal ; I judge it as impossible this man should be deceived herein, as that God should lie. And if one whom I know to be a man of veracity testify these things to me, I ought not, without some sufficient reason, to reject his testimony.

"Q. Is this death to sin, and renewal in love, gradual instantaneous ?

"A. A man may be dying for some time ; yet he does not, properly speaking, die, till the instant the soul is separated from the body ; and in that instant he lives the life of eternity. In like manner he may be dying

to sin for some time ; yet he is not dead to sin, till sin is separated from his soul ; and in that instant he lives the full life of love. And as the change undergone, when the body dies, is of a different kind, and infinitely greater than any we had known before, yea, such as till then it is impossible to conceive ; so the change wrought, when the soul dies to sin, is of a different kind, and infinitely greater than any before, and than any can conceive till he experiences it. Yet he still grows in grace, in the knowledge of Christ, in the love and image of God ; and will do so, not only till death, but to all eternity.

“ Q. How are we to wait for this change ?

“ A. Not in careless indifference, or indolent inactivity ; but in vigorous, universal obedience, in a zealous keeping of all the commandments, in watchfulness and painfulness, in denying ourselves, and taking up our cross daily ; as well as in earnest prayer and fasting, and a close attendance on all the ordinances of God. And if any man dream of attaining it any other way, (yea, or of keeping it when it is attained, when he has received it even in the largest measure,) he deceiveth his own soul. It is true, we receive it by simple faith : but God does not, will not, give that faith, unless we seek it with all diligence, in the way which he hath ordained.

“ This consideration may satisfy those who inquire, why so few have received the blessing. Inquire how many are seeking it in this way ; and you have a sufficient answer.

“ Prayer especially is wanting. Who continues instant therein ? Who wrestles with God for this very thing ? So, ‘ ye have not, because ye ask not ; or because ye ask amiss,’ namely, that you may be renewed

before you die. *Before you die!* Will that content you? Nay, but ask that it may be done now; to-day, while it is called to-day. Do not call this 'setting God a time.' Certainly to-day is his time as well as to-morrow. Make haste, man, make haste! Let

"Thy soul break out in strong desire
Thy perfect bliss to prove;
Thy longing heart be all on fire
To be dissolved in love!"

"Q. But may we not continue in peace and joy till we are perfected in love?"

"A. Certainly we may; for the kingdom of God is not divided against itself; therefore, let not believers be discouraged from 'rejoicing in the Lord always.' And yet we may be sensibly pained at the sinful nature that still remains in us. It is good for us to have a piercing sense of this, and a vehement desire to be delivered from it. But this should only incite us the more zealously to fly every moment to our strong Helper, the more earnestly to 'press forward to the mark, the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus.' And when the sense of our sin most abounds, the sense of his love should much more abound."

Equally erroneous are those who suppose that justification and sanctification are one and the same thing, so much so, that whoever is justified is, at the same time, sanctified, "throughout soul, body, and spirit." One text of Sacred Scripture, bearing directly on this point, is sufficient to settle this question: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

1 John i, 9. Now, if the forgiveness of our sins, which is what is meant in being justified, be the same as to be "cleansed from all unrighteousness," then the apostle has uttered a senseless tautology, for it would, in that case, amount to this and nothing more : "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to forgive us our sins;" and surely such a repetition would be unworthy the lips of inspiration. The apostle, no doubt, meant to assert, that in confessing our sins, in the Scriptural acceptation of these words, including a forsaking them, prayer to God for deliverance, and faith in Jesus Christ as our atoning and interceding High-Priest, we should be forgiven or justified freely by His grace ; and on our continuing to "walk in the light as he is in the light, we should have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son would cleanse us from all sin," ver. 7 ; or, as it is expressed in verse 9, "from all unrighteousness," that is, to sanctify us wholly. Understanding the words thus, the sense is complete, the apostle is consistent with himself throughout, and he speaks the language of experience, as explained above by Mr. Wesley, otherwise he speaks an unintelligible jargon, utterly unworthy an inspired messenger of God.

In one sense, I allow—but not in the sense

in which St. John spoke of the sanctification of believers in the above quoted passages—a man is sanctified the moment he is justified, that is, he is then set apart for the service of his God, and if he persevere in his holy calling, walks in the light, discharges his duties with fidelity, God will sanctify him throughout, “soul, body, and spirit”—in other words, He will “cleanse the thoughts of his heart by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit, that he may perfectly love him, and worthily magnify his holy name.”

But I would not call off the attention of the reader from the above extract from the pen of Mr. Wesley, whose sound Scriptural knowledge, and enlarged experience in the things of God, enabled him to dive deep into the ocean of God's goodness, and to bring up the precious pearls of Divine truth, and then to spread them out before the reader in all their sparkling beauties. Look at them again and again, compare them with the word of God, with your own and the experience of God's most devoted servants in every age of the Church; and if you find you come short in your own experience and practice, lay the axe of truth instantly at the root of the tree of iniquity, which still lives in the heart, and be determined never to rest until it is entirely eradicated.

LETTER IV.

Mr. Wesley's caution—Conversed with those who professed the blessing of sanctification—Met the classes—We should follow his example—His opinion respecting those who professed the blessing—Some are deficient in the graces of the Spirit—Admonishes such—Danger of apostasy—Great work of God.

MY DEAR M—— : In the extracts I have given from the writings of Mr. Wesley, may be seen the extreme caution with which he guarded his people against all erroneous views and practices in reference to this subject. That he might acquaint himself as thoroughly as possible with their state, he mingled in their society, met the classes, and conversed familiarly with those who professed to enjoy the blessing of "perfect love." He did not, therefore, look on with cold indifference, and make his critical remarks as a mere theorist, but he entered heartily into their experience, invited them to speak freely of the dealings of God with their souls, that he might be enabled to form an intelligible and accurate judgment of their true state and character.

It was chiefly for the information of all such, that he wrote down the results of his observations, bringing everything, every doctrine, experience, and practice, to the test of Scripture and right reason. He did not, therefore, imitate the

conduct of those who stand aloof from the scene of action, draw his conclusions from mere reports, whether true or false, and indulge in a cold phlegmatic feeling, or for the gratification of a splenetic disposition, nor yet dispute about those nice points of speculation which may amuse the fancy and feed the vanity of a metaphysical mind ; but he entered deeply into the hearts, and won the affection of the dear people who looked up to him for direction, sympathized with them in all their afflictions, in their temptations, doubts, and fears, encouraging the timid believer, enlightening the ignorant, confirming those who appeared to have attained the perfection which he taught, and adapting his instructions to the conditions and circumstances of all classes of believers in Jesus Christ.

What a pastor was John Wesley ! O that we, who profess to be his followers, and more especially those of us who are in the ministry, may catch the like spirit, exemplify the like tenderness of heart, the like kindness of disposition, and the like diligence in watching over our respective flocks, and in striving to nourish them up to everlasting life ! Were this faithfully and perseveringly done, there would be less bickering among ourselves, less disputing about comparative trifles, less lukewarmness and backsliding

among our people, and more and more earnestness manifested after the inestimable blessing of "perfect love." I would, indeed, that we might all lay aside our controversies respecting little unessential points, and enter unitedly, heartily, prayerfully, and with steadfast FAITH into the work for the promotion of holiness of heart and life. We should then be closer imitators of Wesley, and be more and more instrumental in building up believers "in their most holy faith."

The following extracts will fully evince the truth of the above observations:—

"Q. What do you think of those in London, who seem to have been lately 'renewed in love?'

"A. There is something very peculiar in the experience of the greater part of them. One would expect that a believer should first be filled with love, and thereby emptied of sin; whereas these were emptied of sin first, and then filled with love. Perhaps it pleased God to work in this manner, to make his work more plain and undeniable; and to distinguish it more clearly from that overflowing love, which is often felt even in a justified state.

"It seems likewise most agreeable to the great promise: 'From all your filthiness I will cleanse you; a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.' Ezek. xxxvi, 25, 26.

"But I do not think of them all alike: there is a wide difference between some of them and others. I think

most of them with whom I have spoken, have much faith, love, joy, and peace. Some of these I believe are renewed in love, and have the direct witness of it; and they manifest the fruit above described, in all their words and actions. Now, let any man call this what he will; it is what I call perfection.

“But some who have much love, peace, and joy, yet have not the direct witness; and others who think they have, are, nevertheless, manifestly wanting in the fruit. How many I will not say; perhaps one in ten; perhaps more or fewer. But some are undeniably wanting in long-suffering, Christian resignation. They do not see the hand of God in whatever occurs, and cheerfully embrace it. They do not in everything give thanks, and rejoice evermore. They are not happy; at least, not always happy; for sometimes they complain. They say, this or that is hard!

“Some are wanting in gentleness. They resist evil, instead of turning the other cheek. They do not receive reproach with gentleness; no, nor even reproof. Nay, they are not able to bear contradiction, without the appearance, at least, of resentment. If they are reprov'd or contradicted, though mildly, they do not take it well; they behave with more distance and reserve than they did before. If they are reprov'd or contradicted harshly, they answer it with harshness; with a loud voice, or with an angry tone, or in a sharp and surly manner. They speak sharply or roughly, when they reprove others; and behave roughly to their inferiors.

“Some are wanting in goodness. They are not kind, mild, sweet, amiable, soft, and loving at all times, in their spirit, in their words, in their look and air, in the whole tenor of their behaviour; and that to all, high and low, rich and poor, without respect to persons; par-

ticularly to them that are out of the way, to opposers, and to those of their own household. They do not long, study, endeavour, by every means, to make all about them happy. They can see them uneasy, and not be concerned; perhaps they make them so: and then wipe their mouth, and say, 'Why, they deserve it; it is their own fault.'

"Some are wanting in fidelity, a nice regard to truth, simplicity, and godly sincerity. Their love is hardly without dissimulation; something like guile is found in their mouth. To avoid roughness, they lean to the other extreme. They are smooth to an excess, so as scarce to avoid a degree of fawning, or of seeming to mean what they do not.

"Some are wanting in meekness, quietness of spirit, composure, evenness of temper. They are up and down, sometimes high, sometimes low; their mind is not well balanced. Their affections are either not in due proportion; they have too much of one, too little of another; or they are not duly mixed and tempered together, so as to counterpoise each other. Hence there is often a jar. Their soul is out of tune, and cannot make the true harmony.

"Some are wanting in temperance. They do not steadily use that kind and degree of food, which they know, or might know, would most conduce to the health, strength, and vigour of the body: or they are not temperate in sleep; they do not rigorously adhere to what is best both for body and mind; otherwise they would constantly go to bed and rise early, and at a fixed hour: or they sup late, which is neither good for body nor soul: or they use neither fasting nor abstinence: or they prefer (which are so many sorts of intemperance) that preaching, reading, or conversation,

which gives them transient joy and comfort, before that which brings godly sorrow, or instruction in righteousness. Such joy is not sanctified; it doth not tend to, and terminate in, the crucifixion of the heart. Such faith doth not centre in God, but rather in itself.

“ So far all is plain. I believe you have faith, and love, and joy, and peace. Yet you who are particularly concerned know, each for yourself, that you are wanting in the respects above mentioned. You are wanting either in long-suffering, gentleness, or goodness; either in fidelity, meekness, or temperance. Let us not, then, on either hand, fight about words. In the thing we clearly agree.

“ You have not what I call perfection; if others will call it so, they may. However, hold fast what you have, and earnestly pray for what you have not.

“ Q. Can those who are perfect grow in grace?

“ A. Undoubtedly they can; and that not only while they are in the body, but to all eternity.

“ Q. Can they fall from it?

“ A. I am well assured they can; matter of fact puts this beyond dispute. Formerly we thought, one saved from sin could not fall; now we know the contrary. We are surrounded with instances of those who lately experienced all that I mean by perfection. They had both the fruit of the Spirit, and the witness; but they have now lost both. Neither does any one stand by virtue of anything that is implied in the nature of the state. There is no such height or strength of holiness as it is impossible to fall from. If there be any that cannot fall, this wholly depends on the promise of God.

“ Q. Can those who fall from this state recover it?

“ Why not? We have many instances of this also. Nay, it is an exceeding common thing for persons to

lose it more than once, before they are established therein.

"It is therefore to guard them who are saved from sin, from every occasion of stumbling, that I give the following advices. But first I shall speak plainly concerning the work itself.

"I esteem this late work to be of God; probably the greatest now upon earth. Yet, like all others, this also is mixed with much human frailty. But these weaknesses are far less than might have been expected; and ought to have been joyfully borne by all that loved and followed after righteousness. That there have been a few weak, warm-headed men, is no reproach to the work itself, no just ground for accusing a multitude of sober-minded men, who are patterns of strict holiness. Yet (just the contrary to what ought to have been) the opposition is great; the helps few. Hereby many are hindered from seeking faith and holiness by the false zeal of others; and some who at first began to run well are turned out of the way."

In my next I shall endeavour to give his advice to those who made the profession of perfect love in his day.

LETTER V.

Definition of the word perfection—Anything is perfect which answers its end—The sanctified Christian answers the end for which he was made and redeemed—In what sense he is not perfect—In what sense he is perfect—In love—Does not commit sin—Thus Christ saves his people—Proved from Scripture.

MY DEAR M—— : A few words in explanation of the word perfection, may serve to obviate some objections to the doctrine we are considering. This is a word with which many are offended, more especially its use in Christian theology. But an accurate definition of the term will, I think, tend to remove all just cause of offence, and present the subject in such a point of light, as to induce sincere Christians to embrace the doctrine the word represents.

Anything is perfect which answers the end for which it is made.

Thus a watch is a perfect watch which keeps the time exactly ; otherwise it is imperfect, and its maker is pronounced unfit for his work. Hence, everything which God has made is perfect, not only because it answers its end, but because it was the production of an infinitely wise, powerful, and good Being. Man, in his present depraved state, is imperfect, because he

does not answer the end of his creation. His blinded judgment, his corrupted passions, and his perverted will, lead him astray from the path of uprightness, and plunge him into numerous errors and sins, and finally, if not rescued by Divine grace, into perdition. This very fact, namely, that he does not answer the end of his creation, proves that he is not now in the state in which God created him, otherwise his Creator was an imperfect workman, which supposition is blasphemous in itself.

To rescue man from this state of thralldom, this manifest imperfection, and to restore him to that state in which *he* might answer the end for which he was brought into being, Jesus Christ came into our world, suffered, died, rose again, and ascended to the right hand of the Father, where he ever liveth to make intercession for us. The very design for which he did and does all this is, that he “might save his people from their sins,” to “perfect them in love,” and thereby fit them to answer the end for which he redeemed them here, and then to take them to glory hereafter.

All this preparation, this redemption, this conviction, justification, sanctification, this preservation in holiness, is God’s work, and Moses says, “All his works are perfect.” If, therefore,

it be, as it unquestionably is, God's work to convict the sinner of his sinfulness, to justify the penitent believer, to sanctify the persevering Christian, and to keep him in holiness and righteousness all the days of his life, he is perfectly convicted, perfectly justified, perfectly sanctified, perfectly kept in the path of obedience to His commands, for "all God's works are perfect." To say otherwise is to say, either that the sinner convicts himself of sin, that the penitent justifies himself, that the persevering believer sanctifies himself, and keeps himself in the path of obedience, or that God does his work imperfectly ; both of which suppositions reflect injuriously upon the character of God and the plan of redemption and salvation, and therefore must be rejected as impious, if, indeed, not blasphemous.

When a man is restored by justification and sanctification to the favour and image of God, he is thereby fitted to answer the end for which he was made, and for which he was redeemed by the death of Christ, and for which the risen, ascended Lord Jesus ever liveth to make intercession for him ;—he is now, therefore, a perfect Christian—a living, active believer in Jesus Christ—exemplifying, in the inward tempers of his mind, as well as in his external conduct, the

purity of inward religion, and the regularity and holiness of the commandments.

That the reader may see what is meant by this perfection, I give the following quotations from Mr. Wesley :—

“ (1.) In what sense they are not. They are not perfect in knowledge. They are not free from ignorance, no, nor from mistake. We are no more to expect any living man to be infallible, than to be omniscient. They are not free from infirmities, such as weakness or slowness of understanding, irregular quickness or heaviness of imagination. Such in another kind are impropriety of language, ungracefulness of pronunciation ; to which one might add, a thousand nameless defects, either in conversation or behaviour. From such infirmities as these none are perfectly freed till their spirits return to God ; neither can we expect till then to be wholly freed from temptation ; for ‘the servant is not above his master.’ But neither in this sense is there any absolute perfection on earth. There is no perfection of degrees, none which does not admit of a continual increase.

“ (2.) In what sense then are they perfect ? Observe, we are not now speaking of babes in Christ, but adult Christians. But even babes in Christ are so far perfect as not to commit sin. This St. John affirms expressly ; and it cannot be disproved by the examples of the Old Testament. For what if the holiest of the ancient Jews did sometimes commit sin ? We cannot infer from hence, that ‘all Christians do and must commit sin as long as they live.’

“ A Christian is so far perfect, as not to commit sin.

“This is the glorious privilege of every Christian, yea, though he be but a babe in Christ. But it is only of grown Christians it can be affirmed they are in such a sense perfect, as, Secondly, to be freed from evil thoughts and evil tempers. First, from evil or sinful thoughts. Indeed, whence should they spring? ‘Out of the heart of man,’ if at all, ‘proceed evil thoughts.’ If, therefore, the heart be no longer evil, then evil thoughts no longer proceed out of it: for ‘a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit.’

“And as they are freed from evil thoughts, so likewise from evil tempers. Every one of these can say, with St. Paul, ‘I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;’—words that manifestly describe a deliverance from inward as well as from outward sin. This is expressed both negatively, ‘I live not,’ my evil nature, the body of sin is destroyed; and positively, ‘Christ liveth in me,’ and therefore all that is holy, and just, and good. Indeed, both these, ‘Christ liveth in me,’ and, ‘I live not,’ are inseparably connected. For what communion hath light with darkness, or Christ with Belial?

“He, therefore, who liveth in these Christians hath ‘purified their hearts by faith;’ insomuch that every one that has Christ in him, ‘the hope of glory, purifieth himself, even as he is pure.’ He is purified from pride; for Christ was lowly in heart: he is pure from desire and self-will; for Christ desired only to do the will of his Father; and he is pure from anger in the common sense of the word; for Christ was meek and gentle. I say, *in the common sense of the word*; for he is angry at sin, while he is grieved for the sinner. He feels a displacency at every offence against God, but only tender compassion to the offender.

“Thus doth Jesus save his people from their sins; not only from outward sins, but from the sins of their hearts. ‘True,’ say some, ‘but not till death, not in this world.’ Nay, St. John says, ‘Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because, as he is, so are we in this world.’ The Apostle here, beyond all contradiction, speaks of himself and other living Christians, of whom he flatly affirms, that, not only at or after death, but ‘in this world,’ they are ‘as their Master.’

“Exactly agreeable to this are his words in the first chapter: ‘God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.’ And again: ‘If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’ Now, it is evident, the Apostle here speaks of a deliverance wrought in this world: for he saith not, The blood of Christ *will* cleanse, (at the hour of death, or in the day of judgment,) but it ‘cleanseth,’ at the time present, us living Christians ‘from all sin.’ And it is equally evident, that if any sin remain, we are not cleansed from all sin. If *any* unrighteousness remain in the soul, it is not cleansed from all unrighteousness. Neither let any say that this relates to justification only, or the cleansing us from the guilt of sin: first, because this is confounding together what the Apostle clearly distinguishes, who mentions, first, ‘to forgive us our sins,’ and then ‘to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’ Secondly, because this is asserting justification by works, and in the strongest sense possible; it is making all inward, as well as all outward, holiness, necessarily previous to justification. For if the cleansing here

spoken of is no other than the cleansing us from the guilt of sin, then we are not cleansed from guilt, that is, not justified, unless on condition of walking 'in the light, as he is in the light.' It remains, then, that Christians are saved in this world from all sin, from all unrighteousness; that they are now in such a sense perfect, as not to commit sin, and to be freed from evil thoughts and evil tempers."—*Wesley's Works*, vol. vi, pp. 489–491.

You are requested, my dear M., to read the above extracts with attention, and weigh well their import, and if you have leisure, to turn to the pages in Mr. Wesley's Works, and consult the connexion of these passages, in which he answers sundry objections, which I omit for the sake of brevity.

LETTER VI.

The advice of Mr. Wesley—Highly valuable—Plain and home to the point—He advises them, 1. To watch and pray; 2. To beware of enthusiasm; 3. Of Antinomianism.

MY DEAR M——: The following advices which Mr. Wesley gave to those who professed the blessing of "perfect love" in his day, may be as applicable to such in our day, as they were to them. These advices are the more valuable from their being given by a man of deep experience in the things of God, who, no doubt,

enjoyed the blessing himself, and whose sole object was, without fear or favour to any one—for he regarded no man's person, whether high or low, rich or poor, learned or ignorant, any further than his present and eternal interest was concerned—to lead all in the way of truth and holiness, and that by addressing plain words directly to the understanding and heart, without circumlocution, or any curious metaphysical reasoning, although any man of accurate knowledge, that reads him with attention, must at once perceive that he is reading a man who was a complete master of his subject, and that he understood the art of reasoning to perfection.

While, therefore, he makes no parade of logic, and seldom presents his argument in a logical form, he nevertheless clothes his thoughts with words of uncommon depth, and draws all his conclusions from established premises with that irresistible force which must carry conviction to every honest and enlightened mind. Avoiding curious and learned disquisitions on disputable points of doctrine, he takes his stand where every true minister should, and does, indeed, stand—on the Scriptures of truth—and thence derives all his arguments, and points them directly to the heart.

But while the simplicity of truth is thus ap-

parent in all the writings of Mr. Wesley, and more especially in those now under consideration, there is, at the same time, a peculiar tenderness of spirit, and mellowness of charity, and all the kindness of sympathizing love, manifestly pervading the whole. To the advice of such a man, such an author, to such a minister of the Lord Jesus, we cannot but listen with attention, and persuade ourselves to follow it so far as it seems to accord with sacred Scripture, with Christian experience, and enlightened reason.

“Q. What is the first advice* that you would give them ?

“A. Watch and pray continually against pride. If God has cast it out, see that it enter no more : it is full as dangerous as desire. And you may slide back into it unawares ; especially if you think there is no danger of it. ‘Nay, but I ascribe all I have to God.’ So you may, and be proud nevertheless. For it is pride, not only to ascribe anything we have to ourselves, but to

* The advices which follow were published in a separate tract in the year 1762, under the title of “Cautions and Directions given to the Greatest Professors in the Methodist Societies,” with the following motto :—

“Set the false witnesses aside,
Yet hold the truth forever fast.”

It was evidently intended to guard the people against the mischievous extravagances of George Bell and his friends, a particular account of whom is given in Mr. Wesley’s Journal about that period.—EDIT.

think we have what we really have not. Mr. L——, for instance, ascribed all the light he had to God, and so far he was humble; but then he thought he had more light than any man living; and this was palpable pride. So you ascribe all the knowledge you have to God; and in this respect you are humble. But if you think you have more than you really have; or if you think you are so taught of God, as no longer to need man's teaching; pride lieth at the door. Yes, you have need to be taught, not only by Mr. Morgan, by one another, by Mr. Maxfield, or me, but by the weakest preacher in London; yea, by all men. For God sendeth by whom he will send.

"Do not therefore say to any who would advise or reprove you, 'You are blind; you cannot teach me.' Do not say, 'This is your wisdom, your carnal reason;' but calmly weigh the thing before God.

"Always remember, much grace does not imply much light. These do not always go together. As there may be much light where there is but little love, so there may be much love where there is little light. The heart has more heat than the eye; yet it cannot see. And God has wisely tempered the members of the body together, that none may say to another, 'I have no need of thee.'

"To imagine none can teach you, but those who are themselves saved from sin, is a very great and dangerous mistake. Give not place to it for a moment; it would lead you into a thousand other mistakes, and that irrecoverably. No; dominion is not founded in grace, as the madmen of the last age talked. Obey and regard 'them that are over you in the Lord,' and do not think you know better than them. Know their place and your own; always remembering, much love does not imply much light.

"The not observing this has led some into many mistakes, and into the appearance, at least, of pride. O beware of the appearance, and the thing! Let there 'be in you that lowly mind which was in Christ Jesus.' And 'be ye likewise clothed with humility.' Let it not only fill, but cover you all over. Let modesty and self-lifidence appear in all your words and actions. Let all you speak and do show that you are little, and base, and mean, and vile in your own eyes.

"As one instance of this, be always ready to own any fault you have been in. If you have at any time thought, spoke, or acted wrong, be not backward to acknowledge it. Never dream that this will hurt the cause of God; no, it will further it. Be therefore open and frank, when you are taxed with anything; do not seek either to evade or disguise it; but let it appear just as it is, and you will thereby not hinder, but adorn the Gospel.

"Q. What is the second advice which you would give them?

"A. Beware of that daughter of pride, enthusiasm. O keep at the utmost distance from it! Give no place to a heated imagination. Do not hastily ascribe things to God. Do not easily suppose dreams, voices, impressions, visions, or revelations to be from God. They may be from him. They may be from nature. They may be from the devil. Therefore, 'believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God.' Try all things by the written word, and let all bow down before it. You are in danger of enthusiasm every hour, if you depart ever so little from Scripture; yea, or from the plain, literal meaning of any text, taken in connexion with the context. And so you are, if you despise or lightly esteem reason, knowledge, or human learning;

every one of which is an excellent gift of God, and may serve the noblest purposes.

"I advise you never to use the words, wisdom, reason, or knowledge, by way of reproach. On the contrary, pray that you yourself may abound in them more and more. If you mean worldly wisdom, useless knowledge, false reasoning, say so; and throw away the chaff, but not the wheat.

"One general inlet to enthusiasm is, expecting the end without the means; the expecting knowledge, for instance, without searching the Scriptures, and consulting the children of God; the expecting spiritual strength without constant prayer, and steady watchfulness; the expecting any blessing without hearing the word of God at every opportunity.

"Some have been ignorant of this device of Satan. They have left off searching the Scriptures. They said, 'God writes all the Scriptures on my heart. Therefore, I have no need to read it.' Others thought they had not so much need of hearing, and so grew slack in attending the morning preaching. O take warning, you who are concerned herein! You have listened to the voice of a stranger. Fly back to Christ, and keep in the good old way, which was 'once delivered to the saints;' the way that even a heathen bore testimony of: 'That the Christians rose early every day to sing hymns to Christ as God.'

"The very desire of 'growing in grace' may sometimes be an inlet of enthusiasm. As it continually leads us to seek new grace, it may lead us unawares to seek something else new, besides new degrees of love to God and man. So it has led some to seek and fancy they had received gifts of a new kind, after a new heart, as,
(1.) The loving God with all our mind: (2.) With all

our soul: (3.) With all our strength: (4.) Oneness with God: (5.) Oneness with Christ: (6.) Having our life hid with Christ in God: (7.) Being dead with Christ: (8.) Rising with him: (9.) The sitting with him in heavenly places: (10.) The being taken up into his throne: (11.) The being in the New Jerusalem: (12.) The seeing the tabernacle of God come down among men. (13.) The being dead to all works: (14.) The not being liable to death, pain, or grief, or temptation.

“One ground of many of these mistakes is, the taking every fresh, strong application of any of these scriptures to the heart, to be a gift of a new kind; not knowing that several of these scriptures are not fulfilled yet; that most of the others are fulfilled when we are justified; the rest, the moment we are sanctified. It remains only to experience them in higher degrees. This is all we have to expect.

“Another ground of these and a thousand mistakes, is, the not considering deeply, that love is the highest gift of God; humble, gentle, patient love; that all visions, revelations, manifestations, whatever, are little things compared to love; and that all the gifts above mentioned are either the same with, or infinitely inferior to it.

“It were well you should be thoroughly sensible of this,—the heaven of heavens is love. There is nothing higher in religion; there is, in effect, nothing else; if you look for anything but more love, you are looking wide of the mark, you are getting out of the royal way. And when you are asking others, ‘Have you received this or that blessing?’ If you mean anything but more love, you mean wrong; you are leading them out of the way, and putting them upon a false scent. Settle it then in your heart, that from the moment God has

saved you from all sin, you are to aim at nothing more, but more of that love described in the thirteenth of the Corinthians. You can go no higher than this, till you are carried into Abraham's bosom.

"I say yet again, beware of enthusiasm. Such is the imagining you have the gift of prophesying, or of discerning of spirits, which I do not believe one of you has; no, nor ever had yet. Beware of judging people to be either right or wrong by your own feelings. This is no Scriptural way of judging. O keep close to 'the law and to the testimony!'

"Q. What is the third?

"A. Beware of Antinomianism; 'making void the law,' or any part of it, 'through faith.' Enthusiasm naturally leads to this; indeed they can scarce be separated. This may steal upon you in a thousand forms, so that you cannot be too watchful against it. Take heed of everything, whether in principle or practice, which has any tendency thereto. Even that great truth, that 'Christ is the end of the law,' may betray us into it, if we do not consider that he has adopted every point of the moral law, and grafted it into the law of love. Beware of thinking, 'Because I am filled with love, I need not have so much holiness. Because I pray always, therefore I need no set time for private prayer. Because I watch always, therefore I need no particular self-examination.' Let us 'magnify the law,' the whole written word, 'and make it honourable.' Let this be our voice: 'I prize thy commandments above gold or precious stones. O what love have I unto thy law! all the day long is my study in it.' Beware of Antinomian books; particularly the works of Dr. Crisp and Mr. Saltmarsh. They contain many excellent things; and this makes them the more dangerous. O be warned in

time ! Do not play with fire. Do not put your hand on the hole of a cockatrice' den. I entreat you, beware of bigotry. Let not your love or beneficence be confined to Methodists, so called, only ; much less to that very small part of them who seem to be renewed in love ; or to those who believe yours and their report. O make not this your Shibboleth ! Beware of stillness ; ceasing in a wrong sense from your own works. To mention one instance out of many : ' You have received,' says one, ' a great blessing. But you began to talk of it, and to do this and that ; so you lost it. You should have been still.'

" Beware of self-indulgence ; yea, and making a virtue of it, laughing at self-denial, and taking up the cross daily, at fasting or abstinence. Beware of censoriousness ; thinking or calling them that any ways oppose you, whether in judgment or practice, blind, dead, fallen, or ' enemies to the work.' Once more, beware of Solifidianism ; crying nothing but, ' Believe, believe !' and condemning those as ignorant or legal who speak in a more Scriptural way. At certain seasons, indeed, it may be right to treat of nothing but repentance, or merely of faith, or altogether of holiness ; but, in general, our call is to declare the whole counsel of God, and to prophesy according to the analogy of faith. The written word treats of the whole and every particular branch of righteousness, descending to its minutest branches ; as to be sober, courteous, diligent, patient, to honour all men. So, likewise, the Holy Spirit works the same in our hearts, not merely creating desires after holiness in general, but strongly inclining us to every particular grace, leading us to every individual part of ' whatsoever is lovely.' And this with the greatest propriety : for as ' by works faith is made perfect,' so

the completing or destroying the work of faith, and enjoying the favour, or suffering the displeasure, of God, greatly depends on every single act of obedience or disobedience."

As there are objections to this doctrine somewhat peculiar to our day, I shall, Providence permitting, devote a few pages to their consideration, and endeavour so to obviate them as to set the subject before the reader in such a clear light, that he may rightly understand it and feel its force upon his conscience. In the mean time, I most sincerely beg an interest in the prayers of God's people, that my head, my heart, and my pen, may be guided into all truth; that the "words of my lips and the meditations of my heart" may be acceptable in the sight of God, and that I may be an humble instrument in shedding a ray of heavenly light upon this vitally important theme. I do sincerely praise God that this work of sanctification is reviving and advancing among us, and my prayer to God is, that it may continue to spread until its hallowing influences shall pervade the whole Church.

LETTER VII.

Deep interest in the subject—Union of those who enjoy perfect love—Their holy fellowship—Prayer for steadfastness—Convinced of its necessity—Piercing sense of inbred sin—How produced—This an evidence of the necessity of sanctification—Not a mere opinion, but a heart-felt sense of its necessity—Produces self-abhorrence—The object of writing.

MY DEAR M——: The kind Christian spirit you have exemplified, since my acquaintance with you, has endeared you to my heart, and created an interest in your welfare, temporal and spiritual, present and future, of an indescribable character; and this has been heightened by every interview I have had the pleasure of having with you. And as you profess, and, I have no doubt, enjoy, the unspeakable blessing of “perfect love,” and have frequently requested my views on that subject, I have concluded to examine it as thoroughly as may be, that you, and others similarly situated, should anything I can say be of any use, may be benefited by my remarks.

Among those who are possessed of this jewel of the Gospel, this “pearl of great price,”—for so it may be termed, by way of eminence—there exists a union of spirit, a congeniality of heart, an interlocking of the affec-

tions, which binds them together “in the bundle of life,” creating a sameness of feeling, views, and purposes, which characterize them as the holy followers of Him who prayed that they may be “made perfect in one.” And I feel this with you in a very peculiar manner, so much so that I am constrained thus to avow it, though it may subject me to the charge of weakness, by those who do not understand the nature and effects of Divine love, or perhaps by others to vanity, in supposing myself entitled to a friendship of so hallowed a character—a friendship with one so entirely devoted to God. Be it so. I will not disguise the truth for fear of giving offence to the carnal-minded, by saying that there exists between us, as well as between all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, with a perfect heart and willing mind, an inexplicable union of spirit, which remains the same, whether present or absent; which could be cemented only by having the “love of God spread abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost,” and which is kept up by a reciprocal flow of that love which results from the communion of saints—of that fellowship of which St. John speaks, when he says, “If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have FELLOWSHIP ONE WITH ANOTHER, and the blood of

Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Let then the world scoff, if it will, and the mere formal professor of religion ridicule this sacred fellowship; but let you and I, and all who profess the inestimable blessing of "perfect love," exemplify the purity of its source, the delicate and refined nature of its effects upon the heart and affections, the innocence with which its possessors have intercourse one with another, by "doing righteousness, even as he is righteous." That you, my dear M., may steadily persevere in the path of holiness, in which the Lord has placed your feet, is my most fervent prayer; and I can assure you that it is no small encouragement to me to hear you say that you delight to remember me at the throne of your heavenly Father; but it is still a greater encouragement to us all to know that our great High Priest "ever LIVETH to make intercession for us."

But how were you brought into the possession of this blessing? In the first place, you were deeply convinced of inbred sin—of heart-sin—of the stirrings of anger when provoked, of pride when insulted, of impatience when crossed or disappointed, and a thousand nameless evils which you felt at times, rankling in

your heart, and which sometimes threatened to gain the dominion over you, though by constant watchfulness, prayer, and the exercise of faith in the Son of God, you obtained grace to enable you to resist their influence, and to prevent you from "being brought into bondage again." These evils you saw much more clearly than you did before you were justified, and, consequently, you had a more piercing and abiding sense of your native vileness than you ever had before. Not indeed because you were more vile, but merely because you saw yourself more clearly than you had done or could do before. And this piercing sense of your inward impurity was a certain evidence that the light of Divine truth was shining on your heart, revealing to your inmost soul all the latent evils of your nature.

Like the rays of the sun darting through the window, which reveal numberless motes that cannot be discovered elsewhere, not because there are more of these small particles there than there are in other parts of the room, but because the rays of the sun reveal them; this light of the Divine Spirit, shining into the windows of your heart, disclosed to your interior eye those numerous evils before alluded to, so piercingly indeed as to make you inwardly groan out, "Who shall deliver me from this

body of death?" This penetrating sense of your native impurity caused you to doubt, sometimes, whether you had ever been made a partaker of the pardoning love of God; but yet, on recurring to the happy moment when Jesus spoke in accents of love to your soul, and whispered to your heart, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," you could not question the reality of that act of Divine grace; and as you steadily persevered, according to the light you had, you did not lose the consciousness of pardon, even amidst the conflicts you underwent arising from that inward feeling of inbred sin. You were enabled, therefore, notwithstanding those "fightings without and fears within," to hold fast your confidence in God, your faith in Jesus Christ, and to retain an evidence of your acceptance "in the Beloved." This indeed you must have done, or you could not have been sanctified by the "blood of the everlasting covenant;" for in order to be sanctified, we must retain our justification, otherwise we backslide, and need to be reclaimed before we can be entirely renewed in the image of God.

Well, this consciousness of inward impurity was a plain conviction of the necessity of being inwardly "cleansed from all" this "unrighteousness"—this internal pollution; for I have

no faith in a mere ideal thing of sanctification, a mere floating notion of something that is pleasant, delightful, and pretty, very pleasing to the imagination, unaccompanied by a piercing sense of its absolute necessity in order for the purification of the heart from the contamination of sin. But the sanctification for which I plead, on Scriptural ground, presupposes a self-loathing, arising from a heart-felt conviction of the native impurity of the heart; and this conviction is as evident, as piercing, deep, and genuine, as was the conviction for actual sin before we were pardoned or justified; with this difference,—the latter was accompanied with a consciousness of condemnation, arising from a sense of guilt for our actual sins; the former creating a sweet distress of soul unaccompanied with guilt, but attended with self-abhorrence, on account of the deep stains of sin which we saw and felt in the depths of the soul, and which convinced us of the absolute necessity of an inward, thorough cleansing to fit us for the holy service of God here, and for the enjoyment of heaven hereafter.

Whence, I ask, is the necessity of sanctification? Its necessity arises from our impurity. It implies an inward cleansing. A cleansing from what? From what! From impurity. Unless, therefore, we are thoroughly convinced of this

“inward dire disease,” we cannot feel the necessity of being cleansed.

I have dwelt the longer upon this, because I fear there are many that deceive themselves upon this point. They have heard much upon the subject of sanctification,—that it is a state of holiness greatly to be desired to make one happy, and have pictured to themselves an idea of its superlative excellence, and with a view to obtain it have, as they thought, consecrated themselves to God, and claimed the blessing, without feeling its necessity arising from a consciousness of that impurity of heart which I have endeavoured to depict. This will not do. We must seek it because we need it. We need it because we are unholy. We are unholy because we have sinned. We have sinned, and thereby contracted not only a load of actual guilt, but also much increased our inherent depravity, so that impurity has interwoven itself into every fibre of the soul. And when the character of God is revealed to us in all the holiness of His immaculate nature, by which we are led to contrast ourselves with Him, we view such an awful disparity between Him and ourselves, that we are constrained to cry out, “I abhor myself, and repent as in dust and ashes.”

This self-abhorrence arises, as I have before

remarked—and I wish to press this point, my dear M., upon your heart with all the weight I can bring to bear upon it, because I consider it of the first importance that it should be clearly understood and fully felt—from the light of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ upon the believing soul, by which it is led to see itself “exceeding sinful.” The same light that disclosed this sinfulness—this impurity—this inbred defilement, points, at the same time, to the “Fountain that was opened in the house of David for sin and uncleanness,” and we hear the voice of God saying, Arise, come to the flowing fountain: and the heart replies,—

“I cannot wash my heart,
But by believing thee,
And waiting for thy blood t’impart
The spotless purity.”

I shall endeavour to fortify these views from undisputed authority in my next. In the mean time, permit me to remark, to prevent any trembling soul that may read these lines from sinking down into despair, from a penetrating sense of its native vileness, that the blood of Jesus Christ is of sufficient efficacy to cleanse the foulest stains of sin. Yes, he may say, in the language of our inimitable poet,—

“There for me the Saviour stands ;
Shows his wounds, and spreads his hands :

God is love ! I know, I feel ;
 Jesus weeps, and loves me still."

I write not thus to prevent you, my dear M., from sinking in despair, for I know that you have experienced not only this consciousness of your native impurity, but a happy deliverance from it, and can say, as I have often heard you say,—

"Now I have found the ground wherein
 Sure my soul's anchor may remain :
 The wounds of Jesus for my sin,
 Before the world's foundation slain ;
 Whose mercy shall unshaken stay,
 When heaven and earth are fled away."

That your "soul's anchor" may "remain" firmly fixed on that sure "foundation," is the earnest prayer, just now put up, of your affectionate friend.

LETTER VIII.

The views expressed in the former letter sustained by an appeal to Job—His great afflictions—Justified in the midst of them all—Yet not sanctified—His confession—This the language of every believing heart—A more notable confession of Job—His deliverance and full sanctification—All in conformity to Wesley's poetry—Proved by quotations from his hymns.

MY DEAR M——: Believing that your heart is still beating with pulsations of love to God and man, and that you are ardently desirous to know the whole truth as it is in Jesus, I proceed to sustain

the views I expressed in my former letter, by an appeal to that Book to which all our theories, whether they relate to doctrine, experience, or practice, must be brought for their final decision.

The first that I shall refer to is the Book of Job, being probably the oldest inspired record we have, and containing an account of one of the most extraordinary instances of Divine Providence and grace, watching over the affairs of a favoured servant of God, in the midst of trials of the severest character, and which eventuated in his complete vindication from the accusations of his enemies, and his triumphant victory over all his foes. That Job was a righteous man from the beginning of his history, as recorded in the Book, is evident from the testimony of God himself, who says of him in chapter i, 1, that he “was perfect and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed evil.” And during all the afflictions of body and mind through which he passed, the accusations of his mistaken friends, the calamities which fell upon his household, his property, his own person, and the many temptations which must have pressed upon him, to induce him to abjure his allegiance to his God—in the midst of all these indescribable afflictions he said, “Till I die I will not remove my integrity from me.” “Also now,

behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high." Job, therefore, must, even at this time, have enjoyed a "witness" of his acceptance before God, for his record was on high, his name was recorded in the Book of Life, as one of God's favoured servants; in other words, he must have been justified in the sight of God, and have had so much of grace as to enable him to hold fast his integrity, and so to deport himself in the midst of all his trials, that it was said of him that he "sinned not, nor charged God foolishly."

And yet it does not appear that, during this severe conflict, he enjoyed the sanctifying influences of God's Spirit. Notwithstanding all these evidences of his uprightness, his steadfast confidence in God, his irreproachable life and conversation, yet, when God challenges him to answer for himself, in view of the awfully sublime exhibition of the majestic holiness of his character, Job confesses his native vileness in the following memorable words, chapter xl, 3, 4, 5: "Then Job answered the Lord, and said, Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken, but I will not answer; yea, twice; but I will proceed no further."

O! what a humiliating confession was this!

After all his suffering, which was permitted to come upon him for the trial of his faith and patience; after all the manifestations of God's goodness in sustaining him amidst the fiery trial; after all the testimonies, even from God himself, in favour of the righteousness of his life; no sooner does the glory of God's majesty burst upon him in its—I will not say in *all* its effulgence, for I doubt whether any mortal man could bear up under such a full blaze of God's "dazzling glory bright"—effulgence, than in this light he sees his many imperfections and his native impurity so vividly, and he feels the presence so consciously, that he cries out, in the language of deep self-abasement, "Behold, I am VILE!"

O! my dear M., is not this the language of every believing heart that has come to a thorough knowledge of itself—of its native vileness? Was it not your language after the Lord shone into your soul, and thereby showed you all the latent evils that lay lurking undiscovered until that moment when God unlocked the inner chamber of your heart, and showed you all, at least as much as you could bear to see, the "imagery" that long had enshrined itself there? Then indeed you cried out, in the language of the poet,—

O that my **LOAD OF SIN** were gone !
O that I could at last submit,
At Jesus' feet to lay it down,—
To lay my soul at Jesus' feet !”

But we have a more notable confession from the lips of Job in chapter xlii, 5, 6, where he says, “I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee ! Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.” This confession was extorted from Job after God had proclaimed himself more fully than He had done before his former confession. The manner in which God is represented as unfolding the glories of His august character, His awful majesty, is exhibited so illustriously, and his holiness shines out so conspicuously upon the mind of Job, that it sinks him into the dust, and by comparing his own character with God's, the contrast was so striking that he said, “I **ABHOR MYSELF**, and repent in dust and ashes.” Though, before this, he had known God, had acknowledged Him, had confided in Him as his reconciled Father, yet the brighter manifestations of his perfections now made to him, gave that clearer view of His immaculate purity, of the tremendous nature of His power, the displays of His consummate wisdom, of His intimate knowledge of all the affairs of men ; and all this was exhibited to his astonished soul

so vividly, that he felt himself surrounded, pervaded, and his inmost soul so sensibly touched with the presence of the immense Deity, that his former knowledge seemed remote and imperfect in comparison to his present clearer and more intimate view. Hence he said, I have before only *heard* of thee by the hearing of the *ear*, but now mine *eye seeth* thee. What was the effect of that sight? *I abhor myself!*

O! the contrast between the holiness of God and the unholiness of unsanctified man, when the light of God shines upon his soul! In this “light we see light,” and this light, shining into the otherwise dark chambers of the heart, discloses all the remains of unholiness, and creates an inextinguishable thirst after that righteousness which alone can satiate its longings.

How conformable to this view of himself, as expressed by Job, is that of our evangelical poet, whose poetical lines are always—more especially when depicting, in his own glowing language, the blessings of perfect love—full of fire! Hear him in the following energetic words:—

“Wilt thou suffer me to go
Lamenting all my days?
Shall I never, never know
Thy SANCTIFYING grace?”

Wilt thou not thy **LIGHT** afford ?

The **DARKNESS** from my soul remove !

Help me, Saviour ; speak the word,

And perfect me in love."

I have caused the words to which I wish you, my dear M., to pay particular attention, to be printed in capitals, that you may fully perceive the contrast between the *light* and the *darkness*, and see how emphatically the poet makes the one expel the other, and how exactly conformable were his views and his feelings upon this subject to those of Job, and indeed to all the holy men of God in every age of the Church.

That Job was delivered from the distressed vileness under which he groaned, and which he so feelingly confessed, is most evident from what God said of him in the subsequent part of chapter xlii, from verse 7 to 17. He there rebukes his mistaken friends, orders them to bring a suitable sacrifice to Job, and that his now sanctified servant, whom he had accepted, should pray for them, and "so the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than the beginning." He was now not only brought through the fiery trial, which God had doubtless permitted to come upon him for the testing of his fidelity, but he came off more than a conqueror ; his heart was thoroughly purified from its inherent

vileness ; and so near was the access he had to God in prayer, that He declared he would hear him in behalf of his friends, who had so greatly erred in their estimate of Job's character.

The whole of this process, this confession of vileness, and this deliverance from it, is expressed in the following stanza, from the pen of a poet that may be justly called the "prince of poets," not only because he possessed the spirit of poetry in its highest excellence, but more especially because, as a Christian poet, he entered deeply into the human heart, as well as into the ocean of Divine truth, of Divine power and love, and poured forth, in strains of poetic melody and evangelical sentiment, all the feelings of a soul struggling under a consciousness of inbred sin, until it finally emerges into all the fulness of redeeming love. I love therefore to read him. I love to hear his hymns sung. And I love to quote him for your edification : not indeed because I think you a stranger to the exquisitely fine touches of his lyric pen, but merely to remind you of your indebtedness to CHARLES WESLEY for the finest specimens of true poetical excellence, and for the sweetest, the most deep, experimental, and practical examples of evangelical songs. The following is the verse to which I allude, and I have empha-

sized the words to which I wish more especially to call your attention, as expressing the sentiments I have endeavoured to inculcate:—

“VILEST of the *sinful* race,
Lo! I answer to thy call :
MEANEST vessel of thy grace,
Grace divinely free for all ;
Lo! I come to do *THY WILL*,
ALL thy counsel to *fulfil*.”

After having pondered well and attentively upon these words, every one of which expresses a deep thought, a Divine Scriptural truth, you may turn to the following, which you may read and sing, and read and sing again, and then read and sing a third time, until you feel their deep import pervading your whole soul:—

“Eager for thee I ask and pant,
So strong the principle divine
CARRIES me out with *SWEET constraint*,
Till *ALL my hallow'd soul is thine* :
Plunged in the Godhead's deepest sea,
And lost in thy immensity !”

I have not emphasized any word in the two last lines, because no emphasis can make them more emphatic than they really are, nor add anything to the immeasurable depth of their meaning. May you, my dear M., be

“Plunged in the Godhead's deepest sea,
And lost in its immensity.”

O what must the soul of the poet have felt

when he penned these words ! Surely his mind must have been expanded with a believing view of the unfathomable depth, and the immeasurable length, and breadth, and height of the ocean of God's love, while his soul panted to plunge into it, and be lost in its IMMENSITY !

I have purposely concluded this letter with these views of the subject, to prevent any one who may read what I write from desponding, from a consciousness of his heart-felt impurity. To such bruised, trembling souls, I would present, for their encouragement, the following lines :—

“Redemption in his blood
He calls you to receive :—
Look unto me, your pardoning God ;
BELIEVE, he cries, BELIEVE.”

LETTER IX.

The subject continued—Sustained by the experience of Isaiah—Other texts imply the same truth. *Psa. li, 10 ; 2 Cor. vii, 1 ; Ezek. xxxvi, 25*—The views confirmed by extracts from Wesley, from Fletcher, from Mrs. Rogers—These all sustain the doctrine of native impurity—Poetry quoted to prove the same—How delivered—Poetry quoted for encouragement.

MY DEAR M—— : I still pursue the subject of my last, and cite a few more Scripture authorities in confirmation of the sentiments I have advanced. Look at that memorable passage in Isaiah vi, 3–7. In the fifth verse the prophet

confesses his vileness in the following words :—
“Then said I, Wo is me ! for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.” How came he to this humbling view of himself ? He tells us by saying, “Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts ;” and the King, the Lord of hosts, is denominated in the third verse “holy, holy, holy,” while the “whole earth” is said to be “full of his glory.”

It was therefore this view of the holy character of God which filled the soul of Isaiah with that knowledge of his own heart, that made him cry out, in the bitter anguish of his heart, “Wo is me, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips !” Nor was he left to perish there, or to groan forever under this conscious load of his guilt and impurity ; for it is added in the sixth and seventh verses, “Then flew one of the seraphims, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar. And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips ; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged”—that is, thou art justified and sanctified, for not only his actual iniquity was forgiven, but his internal pollution was washed away, implying most evidently two separate and

distinct acts of divine grace, whether a long or short time apart, we cannot tell.

The question arises, How came Isaiah to this sight of himself? What made him exclaim, "Wo is me, for I am a man of unclean lips?" Was it not from a view of the glorious holiness of God, which he himself revealed to his servant, in such a clear manner as to make manifest all the hidden secrets of his heart, the same as he did to Job?

I must be more brief in my subsequent quotations, or I shall extend the subject to an undue length. All these promises and prayers for a "clean heart," for a "pure heart," and for the cleansing efficacy of the merits of Christ, are predicated of the fact of the inherent impurity of the heart and its affections. Thus David, in Psa. li, 10, after having prayed, in verse nine, for the blotting out of all his iniquities, that is, for the pardon of his actual sins, says, with all the earnestness arising from conscious impurity, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." What necessity of praying for a *clean heart*, unless his heart were already defiled? And if the forgiveness of his actual sins implied or included this inward cleansing at the same time, why pray for it to be done a second time? The thing would be

absurd on either supposition—either by supposing that he had no inward impurity to be removed, or that his justification and sanctification were the same thing.

So also in that often quoted passage in 2 Cor. vii, 1, in which the apostle exhorts his Corinthian brethren, in view of the promises, to “cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” Here not only their moral pollution is implied, but it is expressly mentioned as being incorporated both in the flesh, the body, and the spirit—the soul; and from this filthiness he presses upon them the necessity of an inward cleansing; and to encourage them in this work, he reminds them of the promises,—doubtless referring to Ezekiel xxxvi, 25,—of God to that effect—“I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.”

Now these texts are amply sufficient—and they could be multiplied to almost any extent—to prove the postulatam with which I commenced, namely, that the first step toward obtaining a sanctification of our natures is to be convinced of its absolute necessity, from an inward consciousness of our impurity—not merely an acknowledgment, arising from the presenta-

tion of truth to the understanding, that we are naturally sinful; but the heart must be made thoroughly sensible of the fact, from the shining of God's Spirit into its darkest corners. This it is that shows us that we must be purified by the blood of Christ, that we may offer unto God an acceptable service here, and be prepared for his holy sanctuary hereafter.

But are these views in conformity to those expressed by our standard writers? I think they are. To be convinced of this, read over Mr. Wesley's two sermons; the one entitled, "Sin in believers," and the other, "Repentance of believers," and you will see his sentiments drawn out at length, in which he strenuously contends that all those who are justified, but not yet wholly sanctified, have "inward sin, sinful tempers, passion, or affection; such as pride, self-will, love of the world, in some kind and degree; such as lust, anger, peevishness; any disposition contrary to the mind which was in Christ."

Mr. Fletcher bears testimony to the same truth in the following words:—

"To promote this deep repentance, consider how many spiritual evils haunt your breast. Look into the inward 'chamber of imagery,' where assuming self-love, surrounded by a multitude of vain thoughts, foolish de-

sires, and wild imaginations, keeps her court. Grieve that your heart, which should be all flesh, is yet partly stone; and that your soul, which should be only a temple for the Holy Ghost, is yet so frequently turned into a den of thieves, a hole for the cockatrice, a nest for a brood of spiritual vipers, for the remains of envy, jealousy, fretfulness, anger, pride, impatience, peevishness, formality, sloth, prejudice, bigotry, carnal confidence, evil shame, self-righteousness, tormenting fears, uncharitable suspicion, idolatrous love, and I know not how many of the evils which form the retinue of hypocrisy and unbelief. Through grace detect these evils by a close attention to what passes in your own heart at all times, but especially in an hour of temptation. By frequent and deep confession, drag out all these abominations; these sins which would not have Christ to reign over you; bring them before him; place them in the light of his countenance; and if you do it in faith, that light and the warmth of his love will kill them, as the light and heat of the sun kill the worms which the plough turns to the open air in a dry summer's day."—*Fletcher's Checks*, vol. ii, p. 643.

Mrs. Hester Ann Rogers says, speaking of the necessity of "perfect love:"—

"I have resolved this day, to set myself more fully than ever to attain victory, complete victory, over the evils of my heart, which so often spring up and trouble me; and to this end I will, by thy grace, O my God, mortify every rising desire, and deny myself wholly; and fast more exactly, and pray more abundantly—yea, I will begin afresh, and devote myself wholly to thee, O Lord my God! I can say, 'Thou knowest all things,

thou knowest that I love thee;' but I would love thee with all my heart, and soul, and strength."*

These authorities, both from the Holy Scriptures and our standard writers, are sufficient to show that we are warranted in believing that sin remains in the heart, even after the penitent believer has been pardoned, or justified by grace, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. If anything more were wanting to confirm this point, it may be found in those excellent hymns which are sung in all our worshipping assemblies. In addition to those I quoted in my last, I will present you with a few more specimens. Read attentively the following, in the old edition, for it is left out in the revised copy, much to my regret:—

“ O great mountain, who art thou ?
Immense, immovable !
High as heaven aspires thy brow,
Thy foot sinks deep as hell !
Thee, alas ! I long have known,
Long have felt thee fix'd within ;
Still beneath thy weight I groan ;
Thou art *indwelling sin*.

“ Thou art darkness in my mind,
Perverseness in my will !
Love inordinate and blind,
That always cleaves to ill :

* This quotation is made from the second part of her Journal, which has never been republished in this country, from which I design to give some interesting extracts hereafter.

Every passion's wild excess ;
 Anger, lust, and pride thou art ;
 Thou art sin and sinfulness,
 And unbelief of heart."

Nor does the poet leave himself or his readers to pine away and die under this ponderous weight of indwelling sin, which he so graphically describes, and so feelingly deplores. His words are so full of comfort, and so strongly express the unshaken confidence he had in the power and efficacy of the grace of God in Christ Jesus, that I cannot deny myself the pleasure of quoting them, not only that you, my dear M., may see how exactly they agree with your own happy experience, but that any others who may read these lines, and still be groaning under a consciousness of inbred sin, may take courage and fly immediately to Christ, who was "manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil." Hear him in the following energetic lines:—

" Christ, the Head, the corner-stone,
 Shall be brought forth in me ;
 Glory be to Christ alone !
 His grace shall *set me FREE* :
 I shall shout my Saviour's name ;
 Him I evermore shall praise ;
 All the work of grace proclaim,
 Of SANCTIFYING GRACE.

" Christ hath the foundation laid,
 And Christ shall build *me up* ;
 Surely I shall soon be made
 Partaker of my hope ;

*Author of my faith he is,
He its finisher shall be ;
PERFECT LOVE shall seal me his
To all eternity."*

I have, as usual, emphasized the words to which I wish to call your attention, that you may see how fully and emphatically the poet carries the soul along, from the twilight of early dawn to the light of morning, and thence ascends with him to the top of the mountain of holiness, and seats him in the sunshine of God's smiling countenance, by the side of Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant. O, my dear M., does not your soul catch fire at reading the above words? I feel assured, from my own experience, that you cannot read them, much less sing them, "with the spirit and understanding," without feeling your heart expanding with increasing love to God and man, and without bending the knee in grateful adoration to God for raising up such a man as Charles Wesley to furnish His Church with hymns so Scriptural, experimental, and spiritual.

With your glad heart filled thus with

"Glory and with God,"

you can exult in the ever-brightening prospect which looms up before your ravished soul, while you shout forth the following words with a

sweet anticipation of entering at last into the land of rest :—

“The promised land from Pisgah’s top,*
I now exult to see ;
My hope is full (O glorious hope !)
Of immortality.”

With these words trembling upon your lips, while their deep meaning is playing around your heart, kindling up the fire of divine love, I bid you adieu for the present.

* Compare this verse from the pen of Charles Wesley with the following from Watts :—

“Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o’er—”

Implying a doubt whether it were possible for a believer, with all the advantages he possesses, to ascend the mountain of holiness, and by faith view the “landscape” beyond the “cold flood” of death—while Wesley boldly ascends the lofty summit, sees the land delightfully spread out before him, and, as he triumphantly sings in another verse :—

“Rejoicing now in earnest hope,
I stand, and from the mountain top
See all the land below :
Rivers of milk and honey rise,
And all the fruits of Paradise
In endless plenty grow.”

While Watts is crawling along up the sides of the mountain, doubting the possibility of reaching its summit, from whence he may look into the promised land, Wesley mounts at once to the top of Pisgah, and from thence he views, with the keen eye of faith,

“A land of corn, and wine, and oil,
Favour’d with God’s peculiar smile,
With every blessing blest.”

Which poet do you prefer ?

LETTER X.

The possibility of attaining this blessing—Proved from the design of Christ's coming—From the nature of pure religion—This incompatible with sin—Its possibility appears from the premises—From the language of our poet—Several verses quoted.

MY DEAR M—— : Having, as I believe, fully proved the necessity of an entire sanctification of our natures, I will now attempt to demonstrate its possibility. This arises, in the first place, from the benevolent design of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

For what purpose, it may be asked, did the Son of God come into our world, preach, suffer, die, rise again, ascend to heaven, and for what purpose does he now live at the right hand of God, to make intercession for us? This purpose is most explicitly declared in the word of God: "His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." Here the very end of his coming is expressly announced by the angel of the Lord to Joseph, namely, that he should "save his people *from*," not *in*, "their sins."

"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from ALL iniquity, and PURIFY to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

To say that no one is redeemed from ALL iniquity in this life, and *purified* here to the service of God, is to say that the very design for which the Saviour “gave himself for us” is universally defeated.

“For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.”

What are the “works of the devil” but sin? Surely this beautiful world, with all its rich and varied productions, our food and raiment, and all the blessings of life, are not the devil’s works. He did not make the world. The Apostle Paul will tell us what are the works of the devil. Speaking of the “prince of the power of the air”—that is, the prince of darkness, who dwells in the air or atmosphere—he says, who “now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience.” Here then are found the works of the devil, in the *hearts* of the children of disobedience.

If, then, the Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, and as these works are found in the hearts of the children of disobedience, He must empty the heart of sin, which is emphatically the devil’s work, and fill it with His own pure love.

Now will any man say that the very *end* for which Jesus Christ was born—the express *de-*

sign for which He gave himself for us—the declared *purpose* for which he was manifested, shall never be accomplished? He who says this, does in effect say, that the Son of God forsook the realms of glory, came into our world, suffered and died, rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, where he ever liveth in his godlike power, but is continually defeated in the purpose for which he did and continues to do all this! And can a more injurious reflection be cast upon the Son of God than this?

Its possibility arises, in the second place, from the very nature of that religion which Jesus Christ came to establish in the hearts of the children of men.

What is the nature of this religion? It is nothing less nor more than love to God and man. Love, without any mixture of hatred. Love accompanied with meekness, patience, long-suffering, gentleness, and goodness, which inward graces of the Holy Spirit are always exemplified by an external obedience to the commandments of God. This is the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ. This He came to establish. This He has pledged Himself to work in all those who believe on Him.

Now can this religion consist or subsist in a heart that is filled with sin? We might as well

believe that light and darkness can co-exist, can occupy the same place, as to suppose that this "pure and undefiled religion" can dwell in a heart that is occupied by the works of the devil. Allowing that when grace begins to operate on the heart of a sinner, his heart is full of sin, one or the other, either sin or grace, must ultimately gain the predominance. They cannot long co-exist. And which will finally prevail, provided the believing, penitent sinner resign himself up into the hands of God, persevere in the path of obedience, we cannot doubt, if we rely on the promises of God, that He will thrust out these enemies of His; Jesus will "bind the strong man armed, spoil his goods, and cast him out," and take possession of the mansion himself, and reign without a rival there. Christ and Belial have no concord, any more than light and darkness.

Let, then, this Divine love fill the heart, and all hatred is expelled, and with it this hatred, which is the root of all evil—this hatred to God and man being the pivot on which the soul of the sinner turns in all his whirling acts of disobedience—all his sinful propensities are expelled—slain—annihilated—and love fills every avenue of the soul, actuates the believer in all he thinks, desires, and does.

Its possibility arises, in the third place, from

the many promises of God to that effect. God, indeed, has pledged himself to accomplish this great work in the hearts of all who come unto Him with penitent, believing hearts. "I WILL circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, that thou mayest love the Lord thy God with ALL thy heart, and with all thy strength;" and the fulfilment of this promise, our Saviour tells us, is the answering the whole demands of the law.

Now can any promise be more full, absolute, and comprehensive, than this? And remember, my dear M., that God has said that *He will* circumcise thy heart, that *He will* "cleanse the heart from all unrighteousness." And the apostle, after having prayed God to sanctify the Thessalonians wholly, "soul, body, and spirit," manifestly with a view to remove all cause of doubt respecting the possibility of this thorough work being wrought in them, adds this most encouraging declaration: "FAITHFUL is he that called you, who also WILL DO IT." HE WILL do it. And will He not?

What puny arm is that which lifts itself up against the omnipotent arm of Jehovah? Can it prevail? Nay, indeed! "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel,

travelling in the GREATNESS OF HIS STRENGTH? I that speak in righteousness, MIGHTY TO SAVE!" What words are these! How full of majesty! Of majesty? How full of comfort! He is the God and Saviour, travelling in the greatness of his strength! He speaks in righteousness, but, above all, He is *mighty to save*! O what fullness of comfort is unfolded in these words! I cannot express the wonderfulness of the idea impressed on my mind while meditating upon these words. So full of majesty—of goodness—of loving-kindness—of Divine consolation! The poet has expressed, much better than I can, what occupies my heart at this very moment of writing:—

"Jesus, thy boundless love to me,
No thought can reach, no tongue declare :
O knit my thankful heart to thee,
And reign without a rival there."

And I tremblingly adopt the following lines, which you, my dear M., can adopt with a full, overflowing heart:—

"Thine wholly, thine alone I am,
Be thou alone my constant flame."

Turn to Isaiah lxiii, 1-9, and read the whole passage; then turn to the 321st Hymn, old edition, and read—and sing it too, if you choose—for I know you can—through the first and

second part, and then doubt, if you can, the ability and willingness of the Almighty Saviour to save you to the uttermost—and to *keep* you saved every moment of your life! You will perceive, from these promises—and a thousand others might be added, for the Bible is full of them, both in the Old and New Testaments, they sparkle in the symbolical heavens like the stars in the firmament, though like these they all disappear when the bright Sun of Righteousness bursts upon the soul in His own effulgence, dissipating every cloud from the intellectual horizon—I say, from these promises you will perceive that the accomplishment of this work does not depend upon our strength, upon our works, either of repentance or faith, only as a condition on which the promise is to be fulfilled, but upon the power, the faithfulness, the LOVING-KINDNESS of our covenant-keeping God—upon our adorable, Almighty Jesus. And is He not able to accomplish all that he has promised? What though Satan rage and vent his spite,—

“ In vain doth Satan rage his hour,
Beyond his chain he cannot go ;
Our Jesus shall stir up his power,
And soon avenge us of our foe.”

God, therefore, shall shortly bruise Satan beneath our feet. If the work of sanctification

depended, in whole or in part, upon us, upon our strength or goodness, we might well despair of its ever being effected. But it does not. We must, to be sure, repent, believe, seek, watch, and pray, part with all our idols, and become willing that all our sins should be slain; but, after all this, unless God interpose, by his almighty power—unless Jesus Christ come to our aid by the omnipotence of His grace—unless the Holy Spirit apply the promises by the internal energy of His mighty working, our repentance, believing, watching, and praying, were all vain.

But we may rest assured that God *will* fulfil His promise to those that believe it “with a heart unto righteousness.” We may be as sure of this as that there is a God. He *HAS* spoken the word, and He cannot lie. “Because he could swear by no greater, He hath sworn by Himself, In blessing I will bless thee.” We have, therefore, the oath of God, which is nothing less than God himself, pledging himself, solemnly engaging all his attributes to the fulfilment of his word. On this word—on the veracity of his immutable promise—we may rely with the utmost confidence, with the most unwavering faith, and, doing so, we cannot be disappointed.

In view of these things, who will say that it is impossible? Let him say it that dare contradict God. Let him say it who has the hardihood to insult Him to His face, by telling Him, "Thou art a liar! I believe not what thou sayest." But let you and I give God the glory of being true to all His promises. Let us sing, in the language of the poet:—

"Lord, we BELIEVE the promise sure!
The promised Comforter impart!
Apply thy blood to make us PURE;
To KEEP us pure in life and heart."

So exactly does our poetry correspond with the sentiments of Holy Scripture, that I cannot quote it too often, and more especially for your taste; for you, who are such an enthusiastic admirer of our hymns. Take the following as expressive of the strongest confidence in the efficacy of the Saviour's blood, to break the hardest, and to purify and to cleanse the foulest heart:—

"More hard than marble is my heart,
And foul with sins of deepest stain;
But thou the mighty Saviour art;
Nor flow'd thy cleansing blood in vain;
Ah, soften, melt this rock, and may
Thy blood wash all these stains away."

Does not your glad heart, while meditating upon these encouraging words, thrill with gra-

titude to God ? and as your eye runs along the page until it lights on the following, with which I conclude this letter, only with adding a silent prayer to Almighty God, that the aspiration it breathes may be answered, even while you send it up to His throne, to the joy of your heart :—

“ Still let thy love point out the way :

How wondrous things thy love hath wrought !

Still lead me, lest I go astray ;

Direct my work, inspire my thought ;

And if I fall, soon may I hear

Thy voice, and know that love is near.”

LETTER XI.

Another ground of possibility—The promise of the Holy Spirit—This always necessary, as well under the old as the new dispensation—Proved from sundry examples—The common privilege of all believers—The Scriptures our guide—But these insist on the necessity of the Spirit—This the most vital principle of Christianity—As without the Spirit there is no life—Sustained by quotations of poetry.

MY DEAR M—— : Knowing that you are not willing to take anything for granted that is not well substantiated, and being desirous to grant all your requests, though you should style yourself an “ importunate beggar,” I proceed to show, as well as I am able, another ground of the possibility of the attainment of perfect love. And if I do not fully meet your wishes, propose

your doubts, state your objections, and I will endeavour to gratify the one and to obviate the other, for it gives me unspeakable pleasure thus to converse with you, and to be an humble instrument in the hands of God of communicating light and comfort to such a child of God.

Another ground of this possibility arises from the promise of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, the gift of the Holy Spirit did not originate with Jesus Christ, though this dispensation was more fully opened under the Gospel, and particularly at and after the day of Pentecost, than it had ever been before. Yet all the holy men of God, patriarchs and prophets, old men and maidens, looked for the aid of the Holy Spirit, to enlighten their understandings, to soften, change, and purify their hearts, as much under the old, as those did under the new dispensation. It is therefore a great mistake to suppose that they trusted in rites and ceremonies for salvation, however numerous or punctually they might be performed. They were those only who forsook the true worship of God, and trusted in "a vain show," in outward sacrifices and oblations, and substituted these external observances for the "circumcision of the heart," that trusted in these things for the purification of their natures, independently of the Holy Spirit. David, who

was among the most scrupulous in attending to all the ritual of the sanctuary, arranging the priests in order, appointing the singers and trumpeters to their respective places, said, "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt-offering: The sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Psal. li, 16, 17.

And what could produce this broken and contrite heart, with which God was so much better pleased than He was with burnt-offerings and sacrifices, but the internal operation of the Holy Spirit, breaking down its natural hardness, and subduing its proud and lofty bearing into a contrite submission to the will of God? This David knew perfectly well, and therefore he thus prays in the 11th and 12th verses of this same chapter: "Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit."

It would indeed be almost endless to quote the numerous passages, or to refer to the many examples, where this dependence upon the Holy Spirit is proved even under the Old Testament dispensation. External rites and ceremonies were but symbols of God's presence, through which he shone by His Spirit upon their hearts,

and through them upon the world around about them. Hence when God spoke to Moses through the burning bush, this burning bush was the symbol of His presence, the external sign of His voice, but the voice itself was spoken to Moses' heart by the Spirit of God. How could it be otherwise, seeing that God is a Spirit, and therefore must always manifest Himself spiritually, if at all, to the soul.

But if we turn our attention to the New Testament, we shall find this presence of the Holy Spirit peculiarly set forth as the grand privilege of His people, as the efficient agent to work mightily in them in effecting repentance, faith, regeneration, and sanctification. To see this in the clearest light, read, my dear M., the xivth, xvth, and xvith chapters of St. John's Gospel, and then the viiith chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and read the words of the Saviour as if spoken directly to you, for the promise of the Holy Spirit is "unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call," in every nation, even to the end of the world. Acts ii, 39.

How erroneous are the views of those who suppose that this promise of the Spirit was restricted to the apostolic age of the Church! They who assert this heartless error, would de-

prive the Christian of one of the surest, the greatest, and most efficient, as well as exhaustless sources of comfort, of strength, and the most encouraging aids he can possibly have. These errorists pretend that the Scriptures are our rule, and that consequently we have no need of the Holy Spirit.

I allow that the Holy Scriptures are our infallible rule. But what do the Scriptures teach on this subject? Do they not declare most explicitly, that "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his?" The Scriptures all along point the believer to this very promise, as being made to him, and exhort him to come to this flowing fountain, and drink, and live forever.

What would you, my dear M., think of a man who should publish a book describing where a mine of gold is located, and point out the way by which it could be found, and one of your friends should read the book, and then say he has the gold, merely because he has read the book that describes it, but never takes a single step to ascertain its location, or to possess himself of the rich treasure? Would you not believe him a simpleton? I think you would, and that too very justly. Equally foolish are those who profess to take the Scriptures for their

guide, read their sacred pages, and then content themselves with this theoretical knowledge, without searching for the hidden treasures of wisdom and knowledge, which can be revealed to their hearts only by that eternal "Spirit which searches all things, yea, the deep things of God"—that Spirit which takes of the things of Christ, and gives them unto his disciples, "even the Spirit of TRUTH, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but YE know him, for he DWELLETH with YOU, and shall be IN YOU." John xiv, 17.

I take it for granted, therefore, without any further proof, that it is the high and distinguished privilege of all the children of God to have this Holy Spirit to enlighten their understandings, to change and purify their hearts, to guide them in all their ways, to comfort them in all their afflictions, to support them in all their trials, to strengthen them in all their labours, and to shine upon their path, otherwise dark and gloomy, and make it plain before their face. This I consider one of the most vital principles of Christianity. Strip it of this, and you have but a lifeless corpse. Deprive it of this, and you have the "letter that killeth," but have not the "Spirit that giveth life." It is this Spirit that "giveth wisdom to the simple"—that un-

locks the otherwise hidden meaning of the sacred Scriptures, so that we may read and understand the "words of the Book." Hence those who have this holy Spirit need not fear being entangled in the net of error, because He is a "Spirit of TRUTH," and the promise is, that when "He is come he shall lead you into ALL TRUTH," that is, all truth necessary for your salvation.

Now the question to be decided is, Is not this Spirit fully adequate to

" Kill and make alive"—

to kill sin in the heart, and to make the soul alive to God—to separate the soul from sin, and to unite it to God by faith in Jesus Christ? Of this, it appears to me, there can be no doubt. He is called the *eternal Spirit*. And this eternal Spirit is said to work MIGHTILY in them that believe. What then is too hard or difficult for Him to effect? Cannot that eternal Spirit that garnished the heavens with their beauty—that said to the world, be, and it was—that keeps the worlds in motion—that raised Jesus Christ from the dead—that penetrates the deepest recesses of the human heart—that quickens souls dead in trespasses and sins—cannot THIS Spirit, with all its energies, expel sin from the heart of the

believer, and make "all things new?" He certainly can. He as certainly will, provided only that we yield a willing obedience to His teachings, and consent to be moulded, by His all-forming Hand, into the image of God.

O, my dear M., do you not remember the happy hour, when, after a long, anxious, and painful struggle of soul, in which you groaned under a consciousness of inbred sin, the Holy Spirit descended upon you, whispered peace to your heart, and brought with this inward peace, joy in the Holy Ghost? Did not his irradiating beams shine through all your soul, and did you not in that very moment look up, and behold "the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ?" Yes, you did. And the *Spirit itself bore witness with your spirit that you were a child of God.* And how often, since that most happy era of your life, in prayer, under the preaching of a living minister, in reading and meditating, in conversing with Christian friends, whose spirits were akin to yours, have you felt your heart burning with Divine fire! And this fire was kindled upon the altar of your heart by the secret workings of the Holy Spirit. How often, also, when your soul has been in heaviness through manifold temptations, have you felt yourself suddenly relieved, the tempter was

banished, your soul leaped for joy, and you felt the "love of God, wave after wave, roll over you." What caused this but the Spirit of God? Hence He is styled the COMFORTER.

O ye dead formalists! deprive us not of this Divine Comforter. Teach us not a religion that has a body without a soul. Tell us not of a Christianity that is destitute of the inward life, created, kept up, and invigorated by the living principle infused into it by the vivifying power of the eternal Spirit. Talk as eloquently as you please about such a Christianity, and fortify yourself as you may with arguments drawn from your dried-up fountain of metaphysics, and we will believe you not. I and my friend M. will still sing, in the language of our own inimitable poet—

"Expand thy wings, celestial Dove,
And brooding o'er my nature's night,
Call forth a ray of heavenly love,—
Let there in my dark soul be light,
And fill th' illustrated abyss
With glorious beams of endless bliss."

Let then the formalist boast himself, if he will, of the beauty of his forms, and starve himself with its husks; we, my dear M., and all who are "dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God through our Lord Jesus Christ," will feast on the rich banquet provided for us by the Saviour,

and imparted to us by the Spirit of truth and love. Yes, we will sing, *believingly* sing,

“Let there be light !” again command,
 And light there in our hearts shall be ;
 We then through FAITH shall understand
 Thy great mysterious majesty ;
 And by the SHINING OF THY GRACE,
 Behold in CHRIST thy GLORIOUS FACE.”

LETTER XII.

Its possibility proved from the intercession of Christ—This truth not insisted upon as much as its importance demands—Essential to the Christian system—Contrasted with heathenism—Christ liveth in Godlike power—Intercedes for his people—Sympathizes with them—On this truth Paul founds his argument in favour of complete sanctification—He is an almighty and living Saviour—He sends the Spirit to cement the hearts of God’s people in love—For this he prayed—All proved from Charles Wesley’s Hymns.

MY DEAR M——: Having proved the possibility of attaining to this invaluable blessing from the design of our Saviour’s coming into the world, and from the promises of God made to believers in Christ Jesus, let us inquire if there be not another ground of possibility, arising out of the certainty of the continued intercession of the Lord Jesus.

This truth, namely, that Jesus Christ continually liveth at the right hand of God, to make intercession for us, I have frequently

thought, is not sufficiently insisted upon in our public administrations, or brought so prominently before the people as its importance demands. We dwell much, and very properly too, upon the death of Christ, by which he made an atonement for our sins. But suppose he had died upon the cross, and had been committed to the tomb: if we had no evidence that he now liveth, what possible benefit could we derive from his death? He would be but a dead Saviour—a dead God! Nay, he would have been an impostor; for he had frequently declared to his disciples that he should rise from the dead; and, therefore, unless he had actually risen, and furnished them with indubitable evidence of the fact, all his predictions in relation to that momentous truth would have been fallacious; and hence the failure to demonstrate the reality of his resurrection would have proved him an impostor.

But it was equally essential that he should ascend to heaven, that he might there enter upon the government of the world. For, allowing that he arose from the dead, where is he? No one ever pretended that he is on the earth. No one ever believed that he is still wandering up and down among men—that he is now “going about doing good,” as he did in the

days of his incarnation. But he must be either here or in the invisible world, if indeed he liveth at all.

Besides, if Jesus Christ do not now live, Christianity is stripped of one of its most striking peculiarities. It has, indeed, nothing to raise it above heathenism.

Wherein does Christianity differ from heathenism? In addition to the purity and sublimity of its doctrines, and the morality of its precepts, it differs from it in this, above all other points: it proclaims a risen, a *living* Saviour—an *interceding* High Priest—one that can be *touched* with the feeling of our infirmities, and hence can sympathize with us in all our afflictions, temptations, losses, and disappointments; whereas heathenism taught its disciples to worship the manes of dead heroes, statesmen, philosophers, and poets. They never pretended that any of these ever rose from the dead, and that they now live to make intercession for men on the earth. Hence, the prophets and apostles accused them of worshipping *idols*, or *nothings*, as the word idols signifies, because the objects of their worship existed only in their imaginations, and therefore had no real existence, and therefore could neither hear nor save those who called upon them.

In direct contrast with this barren, heartless theory, the apostles proclaimed an exalted Saviour, who lived in Godlike power, and who is deeply, permanently, and sympathizingly interested in the welfare of his people. He was not like the Jove of the heathen, whom they represented as lolling upon the clouds in indolent inactivity, or with a malicious sportiveness darting down thunder and lightning upon the inhabitants of the earth, thus taking a diabolical delight in their misery ;—on the contrary, the ascended Lord whom they preached was seated at the right hand of God the Father, and, while armed with omnipotence, his heart is full of compassion for the lambs of his flock—while wielding the sceptre of the universe, he is ever attentive to the minutest wants of his people—while upholding all things by the word of his power, he condescends to listen to the prayers of his saints, to deliver those who may be suffering temptations, to soothe their sorrows, and to comfort their hearts with the consolations of his Spirit.

Now it is upon this grand truth, this characteristic peculiarity of the Christian system, by which its claims rise high above the claims of all other systems of religion, whether of Jews or heathen, that the apostle Paul founds his ar-

gument in favour of the complete sanctification, and preservation in holiness, of the souls of God's believing people. "Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb. vii, 25.

Here is the ground of strong confidence to those "who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them." Why is he able to save to the uttermost? Because he ever LIVETH—and he ever liveth to make INTERCESSION for them. He is not like unto the gods of the "heathen around about," whose bodies are mouldering in the dust, and whose souls, allowing that they exist in the Elysian fields, are incapable, from their finite and limited nature, of either knowing the necessities or helping the infirmities of men upon the earth. No; he LIVETH. His soul, body, and divinity, forming an indissoluble union, live in eternal unity, and he continually exerts his Godlike power, and exercises his unbounded love, in behalf of those who come unto God by faith in him, and will therefore save them to the uttermost.

Here is the stronghold of the believer. He does not worship a dead god. He does not believe in, nor pray to, a god that cannot hear, nor feel, nor extend help to those who put their

trust in him. Neither does he worship a being who is indifferent to his interests. He trusts in an almighty Saviour, who can and will save him to the uttermost, even from all his sins—will save him in the hour of temptation—from the influence of all pernicious error—and, finally, with an everlasting salvation.

O, my dear M., what a Saviour have you—have *we*! for I too presume to claim an interest in his powerful, merciful intercession. Yes, it is through this intercession that my most unprofitable life has been prolonged, that my sins have been pardoned, that my soul is now blessed with Divine consolation, and that my heart is strengthened, and moved to write these lines to my dear friend, whom “I love for the truth’s sake.”

Forgive this piece of egotism. My heart, indeed, is so warmed with a consciousness of Divine love, that I can scarcely refrain from proclaiming it aloud, and saying with the sweet singer of Israel, “Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.” In the mean time it is drawn out in such sweet attraction to all the friends of Jesus, and especially to the one whom I now address, that I feel such a spiritual oneness of soul as could only be cemented by the love of

God. Is not this implied in the prayer of the Lord Jesus, "That they may be *ONE*; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me?" John xvii, 21.

What a sacred mystery is here unfolded! And surely when this prayer is answered, and the promise of the Father is fulfilled, this oneness of spirit is felt in the heart, and such love one for another pervades, actuates, and overflows the sanctified soul, as is "unspeakable and full of glory." And all this is the effect of the intercession of our merciful High Priest.

What an indissoluble connexion is prayed for by our Divine Saviour in the above words! The love of the Father flows into the Son, and through him it flows in streams of consolation into the hearts of all who truly believe on Him whom God the Father sent to be the Redeemer of the world, running from heart to heart, circulating, like the blood in the body, through the veins and arteries, into every avenue of the soul, softening, vivifying, and sanctifying all its faculties, and moulding all these lovers of God into one common image—the image of the heavenly. This is better felt than expressed. Indeed, the apostle says it is "unspeakable and full of glory." And is not our divine Interces-

so able to effect this? Will he not do it? Yes, with our consent he unquestionably will.

Now, my dear M., you perceive—though not for the first time, for you have long seen and felt it—that there is no other way into the holiest of holies, but by the blood and intercession of Christ. Hence you have sung, and will continue to sing, in the language of the poet:—

“He ever lives above,
For me to INTERCEDE,
His all-redeeming love,
His precious blood to PLEAD;
His blood atoned for all our race,
And sprinkles now the throne of grace.”

You will not, I am persuaded, pass these words over lightly, much less slightly, on account of their commonness, or the frequency with which they are sung, but will mark their deep import, and put the most implicit confidence in their Scriptural truth, and you shall feel for yourself that the

“Spirit answers to the blood,
And tells you you are born of God.”

And if you want your faith strengthened, your hope animated, and your love increased, and your whole soul quickened into new life, turn to the 595th hymn, among the additional hymns, old edition, and read it through, and you will see how the soul of the poet swelled

with gratitude to God, and how, by strong faith in Jesus Christ, he bid defiance to his spiritual enemies. In the name of Jesus, his great High Priest, his powerful Intercessor, he marches boldly up against his "gigantic foe," his "own besetting sin," hurls him from his seat, and prostrates him in the dust. Hear him—nay, *sing* him in the following triumphant language:—

"In the strength of Jesus' name,
I with the monster fight;
Feeble and unarm'd I am,
But JESUS is *my* might;
Mindful of his mercies past,
Still I trust the same to prove;
Still my HELPLESS soul I cast
On his REDEEMING love."

What power and virtue did this sweet, this "feeble," this "helpless" singer in Israel find in the name and strength of Jesus, the "conquering King!" It would seem that while he felt himself weak as "helpless infancy," he felt at the same time such strong faith in his redeeming God, his living, omnipotent Intercessor, that he rises superior to all his enemies, arms himself with his strength, and goes forth to the warfare without a single doubt, nay, with the fullest confidence of a sure, certain, and triumphant victory—but it is *through Christ who strengtheneth him*.

I cannot deny myself the pleasure of quoting

one more verse from this song of triumph, in which I know not which to admire most, the beauty of the poetry, the purity of the sentiment, or the strength of his faith, they are all so exquisitely blended together, and expressed with the energy of that language, coming from the depths of a heart overflowing with gratitude and love, which bespeaks the earnestness and sincerity of his soul. Read, my dear M., and let your glad heart go along with the words, the following lines, and I am sure your whole soul will be lifted above all doubt and fear, and you will feel yourself carried upon the wings of faith and love to the throne of the eternal God, and upheld in the arms of your heavenly Father :—

“ EVERY DAY the Lord of hosts
 His MIGHTY POWER displays ;
 STILLS the proud Philistine's boast,
 The threat'ning Gittite SLAYS :
 Israel's God let all below,
 Conqu'ror over SIN proclaim :
 O that all the earth might know
 The POWER OF JESUS' NAME !”

The more we feel of the power of redeeming, sanctifying grace, the more ardently do our hearts exclaim—and therefore I know your heart exclaims, even while reading these lines—

“ O that all the earth might know
 The power of Jesus' name ”

LETTER XIII.

The nature of sanctification—The word means to set apart from a common to a special purpose—Proved from Scripture—Hence it requires the death of a separation from sin—Differs from justification—To retain this, we must seek sanctification—This is God's will—He can require nothing less—For not seeking this, many backslide—An appeal to M.'s experience—Anticipation of future bliss—All confirmed by our Hymns.

MY DEAR M—— : Having shown the necessity and possibility of holiness of heart and life, it seems proper to attempt an explanation of its nature, or in what it consists.

*Anything is said to be sanctified that is set apart from a common to a special service. The radical meaning of the word to sanctify, is, therefore, to set apart.**

The word rendered holy has a kindred signification, implying that anything which has been taken from *earthly* and consecrated to *heavenly*,

* The Hebrew word קָדַשׁ, (*kadish*,) which signifies to be pure, clean, is indifferently rendered by our translators, *holy*, *pure*, or to be *sanctified*, and imports a deliverance from physical, ceremonial, or moral pollution, and of course implies that whatever is thus cleansed, has been consecrated to the special service of Almighty God, or at least from a common to a special use. The Greek word, ἅγιος, (*agios*,) has a kindred meaning to the above Hebrew word, into which the latter is translated in the Septuagint, both implying that whatever man or thing is thus denominated, has been set apart from common or earthly purposes to a special or religious purpose.

or *spiritual*, or *religious* purposes, is denominated *holy*, or is set apart for a *religious* use. This is the radical import of those two words, and this radical meaning will be found to be kept up in all those places where they occur in the Holy Scriptures, however little or much they may differ in their various applications to different things and subjects.

So it is said in Gen. ii, 3 : “ And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it ”—that is, he set it apart as a day of holy rest, and hence it has ever been denominated the holy Sabbath, because it has been set apart from the other days of the week from secular to sacred purposes.

In Exodus xix, 10, it reads : “ And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes.” The people were thus called upon to separate themselves from all uncleanness, to cease from their common and otherwise lawful avocations, that they might thus be prepared to hear the voice of God speaking unto them through his servant Moses, to whom God was about to reveal his law. This related chiefly to an external cleansing, though doubtless God required the internal purification of the heart, which was typified by

the "washing of their clothes," and the abstaining from all fleshly indulgences.

Other passages might be quoted in support of this idea of sanctification, but these must suffice. There are one or two places, however, in which the word is used without any reference at all to the cleansing of the person from either external or internal pollution, as in John xvii, 19, where Jesus Christ saith, "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth." Here the word most evidently signifies that setting apart, or that solemn dedication of Himself to the glorious work of man's redemption, for which Jesus Christ came into our world, and which he accomplished by his death and resurrection, and not from any cleansing from either natural, ceremonial, or moral pollution, for Jesus Christ was "holy" from the beginning, "harmless and undefiled, and separate from sin," through the whole course of his spotless life.

Having thus ascertained the primary meaning of this most expressive word, and seen its various applications to men and things, let us examine its signification in its application to individual men and women, as sinners that need the cleansing efficacy of the blood of Christ. Taking along with us the radical meaning of

the term, implying a setting apart, it imports that all the powers of the soul and body have been, or must be, solemnly consecrated to God's holy service. This most assuredly includes "a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness." The soul that is wholly sanctified is separated from sin, sin being entirely eradicated from the heart, so that it no longer "has dominion over him."

In this sense it differs from justification, though every justified soul is in part sanctified, in the sense just now given, and in a lower sense it is wholly sanctified, that is, the soul that is now justified in the sight of God, is now solemnly dedicated to his service ; having renounced "the world, the flesh, and the devil," he has pledged himself to be hereafter devoted to God, and to follow him according to the clearest light he has, and according to the best of his ability ; and if he continue, as certainly he may, to "walk in the light, as He is in the light, the blood of Jesus Christ his Son will cleanse him from all unrighteousness," and that speedily and effectually.

Nor can a justified man long retain his justification unless he persevere after sanctification ; for no man can stand justified before God, while he opposes or refuses to follow the will of God ;

and this is "His will, even our sanctification," fully declared, not only in the text just now cited, in which a part is put for the whole, and therefore fully includes the doctrine of entire sanctification—for he that abstains from the vices prohibited in the context, will necessarily abstain from all others—but generally throughout the word of God. In fact, the sum and substance of all God's requirements, the manifest aim of all his institutions, whether under the old or new dispensation—the very design for which the Lord Jesus came into our world, suffered and died—the definite object of all the commands and promises of God—all these express, in unequivocal language, the will of God to be, that we should be holy. He cannot, indeed, consistently with his nature, require anything less. What is His nature? Is it not holy? Pure essential holiness? Is not then His will governed by this inflexible principle of His nature? To require, therefore, anything beside, or inferior to this, would be to contravene the immutable law of His own nature. This, then, is the unalterable law, the immutable will of God, that we should be sanctified. He cannot, as I have already said, require anything less. And this he has expressed a thousand times, in a thousand different places, and in a thousand ways.

Well, now, can a man stand justified before God, who refuses to make this will—THIS will—manifested in such numerous ways, declared in such a variety of phraseology, and expressed in so many places, by such unambiguous language—I say, can a man retain his justification who does not make this WILL the supreme rule of his faith and practice? I hesitate not to affirm, and I believe every enlightened Christian, who is rightly instructed in the principles of Christianity, will say amen to my affirmation, that no man can stand justified in the sight of God, who does not either enjoy, or does not earnestly seek after, the full sanctification of his soul and body to God.

For the lack of this there are so many weak and sickly among us, half dead and half alive professors of religion. They content themselves with some faint desires, unaccompanied with any strenuous, persevering efforts after this “great salvation,” hence their prayers are cold and formal, and when they attempt to sing,

“Hosannas languish on their tongues,
And their devotion dies.”

They are in fact backslidden. They have “lost their first love,” and perhaps they are already questioning the work of grace which God once wrought in their hearts. They are, in the lan-

guage of St. Peter, "blind, and cannot see afar off, and have forgotten that they were once purged from their old sins." What an awful state is this! Why is all this? Why? Alas! It is because they have neglected to "go on unto perfection." Instead of "forgetting the things that are behind, and pressing forward to the things which are before," aiming at the "prize of their high calling of God in Christ Jesus," they have looked back at their past experience, until they have lost sight of both it and the "mark of the prize set before them"—the prize of "perfect love," of entire sanctification of soul and body to God. They have lost the evidence of their acceptance in the Beloved, merely because they have neglected to make the will of God, which is their sanctification, the rule of their faith and practice.

I have been carried along so fast by following the current of my thoughts, that I find myself unable to finish the definition of sanctification in this letter, and must conclude with quoting a few verses of our most excellent Hymns, in confirmation of the views already expressed, merely premising that you, my dear M., have already anticipated me in what I have said, or may say, on this subject, by your own happy experience. You know, that when made a partaker of this

great blessing, you had already, and at that interesting moment, more solemnly and unreservedly than ever, consecrated yourself, your whole soul and body, to the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and that from that time to the present, you have felt that you are "not your own," but being "bought with a price," even the price of the blood of the Son of God, you are not at liberty to withdraw any part of the offering, but that you must continually keep yourself at the foot of the cross, while you look up with a believing, loving, obedient heart to your great LIVING Intercessor for the daily, the hourly, the every moment supplies of his Spirit and grace, to enable you to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free." Yes, you said, in the expressive language of the poet,—

"Pleasure, and wealth, and praise no more
Shall lead my captive soul astray;
My fond pursuits I all give o'er,
Thee, ONLY THEE, resolved to obey.
My OWN IN ALL THINGS to resign,
And know no other WILL but THINE."

And having thus consecrated yourself to God, and felt the sealing influence of the Holy Spirit upon your inmost soul, enabling you to say,

"Abba, Father, I know myself Thy child,"

you could exultingly, while looking around on the spiritual army of God, those especially who

had gained the victory over sin, and were standing with their bright armour on, sing the following lines of the poet, of faith, of love, and of hope :—

“Blest, O Israel, art thou !
 What people is like thee !
 SAVED FROM SIN by Jesus now
 Thou art, and still shalt be.
 JESUS is thy seven-fold SHIELD,
 JESUS is thy FLAMING SWORD ;
 Earth, and hell, and sin shall yield
 To God's Almighty word.”*

O my God ! What must the soul of the poet have felt when he penned these words ! Armed with this panoply Divine, with “Jesus for his seven-fold shield,” with “Jesus for his flaming sword,” he might well bid defiance to “earth

* The pen of Charles Wesley never dipped deeper into the fountain of divine love, nor ever depicted in brighter colours the complete triumph of “perfect love,” than it did in that admirable hymn. Hear him in the following glowing language :—

“In a land of corn and wine,
 His lot shall be below,
 Comforts there, and blessings join,
 And milk and honey flow !
 JACOB'S WELL IS IN HIS SOUL !
 Gracious dews his heavens distill,
 FILL his soul, already FULL,
 And shall FOREVER FILL !”

I pity the man that cannot relish the exquisitely fine touches of this poetry, nor perceive the depths of those words which recognize the Saviour's metaphor of the “well of water springing up into everlasting life !”

and hell," and have said and sung, and said and sung again, "Sin shall yield"

"TO GOD'S ALMIGHTY WORD!"

May you, my dear M., be thus

"Equipp'd for the war."

And may the writer of these very imperfect letters have the unspeakable pleasure of sharing with you in the triumph of

"Redeeming grace and dying love."

May we together sing, in anticipation of the uncreated, the indescribable, the inconceivable glories of heaven—

"There we shall meet again,
When all our toils are o'er,
And death, and grief, and pain,
And parting are no more ;
We shall with our brethren rise,
And grasp thee in the flaming skies.

"O ! happy, happy day,
That calls thy exiles home !
The heavens shall pass away,
The earth receive its doom :
Earth we shall view, and heaven destroy'd,
And shout above the fiery void !"

Shall it be so? Yes, by the grace—the rich abounding grace of God in Christ Jesus—I can, I think, with trembling humility, and yet with a firm, unwavering faith in the promises of God, say—

“These EYES shall see them fall,
Mountains, and stars, and skies !
These EYES shall see them all
Out of their ashes rise !
These LIPS His praises shall rehearse,
Whose nod restores the universe.”

O, my dear M., shall our eyes see that grand consummation with joy ? How poor do all the glories of *this* world appear when compared to those of *that* ! May you and I share in those glories ! And may a spark of the Divine love, which I feel burning in my heart at this moment of writing, be communicated to the heart of my friend !

LETTER XIV.

A further explanation of sanctification—Paul's doctrine—A death of sin and a life of holiness—Explanation of the terms *death* and *life*—The two states incompatible with each other—John supports the same doctrine—It is God's work to sanctify—And therefore it can be done—The same truth proved from poetry.

MY DEAR M——: We have already seen that anything which is holy or sanctified has been set apart, or consecrated to the special service of Almighty God. And in the application of the term to an individual, it imports that he has solemnly consecrated himself, his soul and body, his time and talent, to God, to be used and em-

ployed in any way that he may see fit. The least that is implied in this entire consecration is, that he is delivered from sin, properly so called.*

No truth, indeed, is more unequivocally revealed and frequently insisted upon in the Holy Scriptures than the absolute necessity, as well as the easy possibility, of a deliverance from sin, in order that we may be "holy, and without blame before Him in love all the days of our lives." "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Rom. vi, 1, 2.

Many doubtingly inquire now, How is it possible for us to be delivered from sin? Not so the apostle Paul. His clear and comprehensive views of the rich provisions of the Gospel of the grace of God—his strong faith in the efficacy of the blood of Christ—his firm confidence in the mighty working of the eternal Spirit—made him wonder that any one should say that there is a necessity for our living any longer in sin. Nay, he asserts in the above text the utter impossibility of a person that is "DEAD TO SIN LIVING

* See the extracts from Wesley, for the distinction between wilful sin and the sin of ignorance; between those infirmities inseparable from human nature, and sins properly so called.

any longer therein." And this will appear most evident to every person who duly considers the import of those words, *dead* and *alive*.

When a man is said to be *dead* to a thing, it is the same as to say that he is *separated* from it—the word *death* meaning the *effect of separation*—the thing separated ceasing to live, though it may still exist in another form. Thus, if we separate a limb from the body, the separated limb dies, as a necessary consequence. This might easily be illustrated by a thousand examples, but its plainness renders this unnecessary.

Well now, if the Christian be *dead* to sin, sin is *separated* from his soul, eradicated from his nature, so that it no longer reigns over him, or rules within him. From this "body of death," that is, the body of sin, which brought spiritual death upon his soul, and long hung about him, like a rotting carcass, he is now delivered, so that a divorce has been effected from all his corrupt passions and appetites—the "old man, with all his evil deeds, is crucified," slain, and entirely severed from his soul.

Now, how can a man that is thus dead to sin—separated—cut off from it—*LIVE* any longer therein? To be alive to a thing, is to be *united* to it—*life* being the effect of *union*. Thus, while the soul and body remain united, they

live together in the flesh, but the moment a separation takes place, the body dies, as a necessary consequence. Can a man be *dead*, that is, *separated* from sin, and at the same time *live*, that is, be *united* to it? Can a man be *separated* from the city of New-York, and at the same time be *united*, that is, *live* here? The thing is utterly impossible. Hence says the apostle, in verses 6 and 7:—

“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be DESTROYED, that henceforth we should not serve sin; for he that is dead”—to sin—this being destroyed by the baptism of the Holy Ghost—“is freed from sin,”—entirely separated from it. He then exhorts them to “reckon themselves to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” “Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.” And if sin be so effectually destroyed that it does not reign in the “mortal body,” so entirely conquered that all the bodily appetites and passions are so sanctified that we need not indulge in any fleshly gratification that is inconsistent with the pure principle of holiness, surely the soul, which is, under the grace of God, the prime mover and regulator of all the bodily appetites

and passions, must also, and more especially, be freed from the dominion, yea, from the very in-being of sin.

Texts of Scripture speaking a similar language could easily be multiplied, but my space will not allow of an extended use of them. There is one passage, however, in 1 John iii, 9, so fully in point, and which tends so completely to establish the doctrine under discussion, that after referring you, my dear M——, to the entire passage, 1 to 9, I must take the liberty of quoting the ninth verse for its full confirmation. It is as follows :—

“Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin : for his seed remaineth in him : and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.”

This is strong, as well as plain and unequivocal language. He cannot sin—that is, he cannot, consistently with his high and holy character, as an adopted child of God, born to a heavenly inheritance, and, as such, bound to obey all the laws of his heavenly Father, who has taken him into a sacred union with himself, through faith in his Son, demean and disgrace the purity and dignity of his new relationship, by stooping to the drudgery of sinning in thought, word, or deed. Not that he has no power to sin, for he still possesses

all the natural moral power he ever did, and therefore might, as easily as Eve and Adam did, “turn away from the holy commandment delivered unto him;” but the “law of God being written on his heart, and imprinted in his inward parts,” so long as he obeys its precepts, “walks in the light as he is in the light,” he has fellowship with God, and with all the “holy brethren,” and he “keeps himself unspotted from the world.” In this sense “he cannot sin, because he is born of God,” and his “seed remaineth in him;” so long as it remaineth in him as a LIVING, active principle, it vegetates, buds, and blossoms, and bears fruit to the glory of God; and his heavenly Father “purges him, that he may bring forth more fruit;” and whatsoever he doeth prospers, because his work is of and in the Lord.

This death unto sin, however, is not procured without a violent and painful struggle. As the death of the body is generally preceded and accompanied by violent pains, and struggling agonies, so this spiritual death of the “body of sin”—this separation of sin from the soul—is attended with the most painful sensations, arising from the strong grasp which sin has upon the soul, and the powerful bias created by years of habitually yielding to the dictates of corrupt

nature. And it is not to be supposed that this severance between the affections of the heart and those sinful objects around which they have so long entwined themselves, can be effected without inflicting pain; and hence the Holy Scriptures compare it to some of the most exquisitely painful sensations to which human nature can be subjected; hence also the tears that are shed, the groans that are uttered, the earnest prayers that are offered, the strenuous efforts that are made to exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, by a person that is struggling under the tyrannical power of inbred sin, and striving to deliver himself from its cruel grasp. He may weep, groan, pray, and believe in vain, unless the Lord God Omnipotent come down to his help. The moment, however, the "sword of the Spirit" is unsheathed, and wielded by the hand of Omnipotence, and enters the heart, "piercing to the dividing asunder the soul and spirit, the joints and marrow," the close and strong connexion that had long existed between the affections and sinful objects is cut asunder, and the freed affections, healed of the wounds thus made by the separation effected, by the balm of Jesus' blood, instantly fly up, and fix themselves "on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of the Father."

Now the redeemed purified soul sinks down into a calm submission to the will of God. The stormy passions subside, the warring elements within cease their raging, unbelief is expelled, and the sanctified soul feels all that heaven-born peace, which Jesus promised to his disciples when he said, "My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have PEACE: be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world." I have conquered, by the operation of my Spirit, all that worldly disposition by which you were so much troubled while struggling to get free from the dominion of sin, and now you have that "peace of God which passeth all understanding."

How conformable to the above sentiments, all drawn from sacred Scripture, are the following, expressed in the glowing language of the poet of Methodism:—

"Thou hidden love of God, whose height,
Whose depth unfathom'd, no man knows,
I see from far thy beauteous light,
Inly I sigh for thy repose;
My HEART IS PAIN'D, nor can it be
At REST till it find rest IN THEE."

And how ardently does the poet supplicate for a separation between the affections of his

heart and the objects of sense with which he is surrounded, in the following verse !

“Is there a thing beneath the sun,
That strives with thee my heart to share ?
Ah, TEAR it thence, and REIGN ALONE,
The Lord of every motion there !
Then shall my heart from EARTH BE FREE,
When it hath found REPOSE IN THEE.”

I must beg of you, my dear M., to read this hymn, the 304th of the old collection, through, and mark how completely the poet depicts the painful sensations the soul that is panting, struggling, and reaching forth the trembling hand of faith, passes through, while he prays in the following language for spiritual life :—

“O hide this self from me, that I
No more, but Christ in me may *live* !
My vile affections CRUCIFY,
Nor let ONE darling lust SURVIVE !
In all things nothing may I see,
Nothing *desire* or *seek* but THEE.”

How any one can read, and, above all, sing such hymns, and then doubt the possibility of attaining the heights and depths of perfect love, of having his “vile affections crucified,” of having his “heart from earth made free,” so that not “one darling lust should survive,” I am at a loss to conceive. And Charles Wesley was not a man to put unmeaning words into the

mouth of a congregation, and teach them to sing,—

“ Speak to my inmost soul,
I am thy love, thy God, thy all,
To feel thy power, to hear thy voice,
To TASTE THY LOVE, be all my choice,”

while he did not believe any such thing attainable. No, no! He meant what he said, and he said what he felt. And may you, my dear M., and all who read these words, be able to say and sing in faith, in full confiding faith, in that faith which takes hold on God, and believes the promise sure:—

“ Reign in me, Lord, thy foes control,
Who would not own thy sway ;
Diffuse THINE IMAGE THROUGH MY SOUL,
Shine to the perfect day.

“ Scatter the LAST REMAINS OF SIN,
And SEAL me thine abode ;
O make me glorious all within,
A TEMPLE BUILT BY GOD.”

LETTER XV.

The evidence of sanctification—Direct, indirect, and external—
The direct witness—This the doctrine of all evangelical
Christians—The way so plain, that no one need err—Contrary
opinion absurd—The witness is God's Spirit—This bears wit-
ness to His own work—Shines by His own light—Proved by
sundry arguments—By our poetry.

MY DEAR M——: Having shown the possi-
bility and nature of holiness or sanctification, it
seems proper that we should inquire into the
evidence of its existence. This is three-fold.

1. Its internal, or direct witness, to the heart
of the believer.

2. Its indirect evidence, which is its fruits,
called the fruits of the Spirit.

3. Its external evidence, called keeping the
commandments of God.

In regard to the first evidence, the internal
witness of the *Holy Spirit, which bears witness
with our spirits that we are the children of God*
—the sacred Scriptures are full of it, so full
that all the holy men of God, patriarchs and
prophets, primitive fathers of the Church, re-
formers, Luther and Calvin, and every true evan-
gelic minister, bear testimony to its truth and
reality, either in direct and explicit terms, or by
necessary inference. Indeed it would be one

of the greatest absurdities imaginable to suppose that God would require us to seek after any particular blessing, and threaten us with everlasting destruction if we did not find it, and promise us a present and an eternal reward if we did, and yet never let us know whether we had come into its possession or not. An earthly parent who should deal thus with his child; that is, command him to do a certain job of work, and threaten him with a severe punishment if he did not do it, and a certain reward if he did, and yet never let the child know whether or not he had done it, would be denounced, by every reflecting mind, as cruel, unfit to rule, and would be deprived, if justly dealt with, of his parental authority. And shall we attribute to our heavenly Father such a capital defect in his government?

Has he marked out the road to heaven with such obscure lines, that those who are making their escape from earth to heaven can never know whether they are in it or not? Has he required us to be holy, and has He, at the same time, left holiness so obscurely defined, so imperfectly described, and the way to obtain it so uncertainly marked out, that those who seek it, and actually find it, are so left in the dark that they can never know whether they are in the

way or not, or whether they are in the possession of that holiness which is the object of their pursuit? Surely this cannot be so.

Nay, so far from this being the unhappy case, the way of holiness, thrown up for the redeemed of the Lord to walk in, is so plain, that the "wayfaring man, though a fool" in other respects, "need not err therein." God has made the way to heaven, which is the way of holiness, so plain, and furnished us with such evidences of its plan, of its reality, of its length and breadth, that no one, unless he be wilfully blind, or inexcusably careless, need mistake it, or dangerously err therein, or live without a satisfactory witness in himself that he possesses the requisite qualifications for the enjoyment of God in heaven.

But let us inquire what this witness is. It is none other than *God's Spirit bearing witness with our spirits that we are his children*. His Spirit bears witness to His own work, in every step of its progress, from conviction of sin to repentance, faith in Jesus Christ to justification, regeneration, sanctification, and so on in the path of holiness, until the purified believer arrives to the kingdom of glory. Not a single step does the sinner take in the way of repentance, believing in the Lord Jesus Christ for the pardon

of his sins, the surrendering of his whole heart to God by faith in Christ for the entire destruction of sin, and the full sanctification of his nature, and all his subsequent progress in the path of obedience to the commandments of God, but what God shines upon the work by his Holy Spirit, illuminates his understanding, sheds his heavenly rays into the darkest corners of his heart, communicates strength to make him to repent, believe, and finally, when the work either of justification or sanctification is accomplished, bears testimony to God's work upon the soul, that it is done, and well done too, for "all God's work is perfect." Thus the Spirit goes before us, opens the way, removes the stumbling-blocks, scatters our enemies, overcomes, by our yielding to His holy influence—and this yielding itself is in consequence of His aids—our native opposition to the ways of God, and finally, when we are adopted into the family of God, enables us to "cry, Abba, Father, I know myself thy child."

Do you doubtfully ask, How shall I know it? No—you do not. You, my dear M., remember perfectly well, when, after a long struggle of soul, in which you poured out strong cries and tears to God for this very blessing, being encouraged by those Christian friends who

surrounded you, and mingled their prayers of faith with yours, the Lord appeared to your troubled heart, removed the load of inward pollution under which you groaned, shed abroad his love in your heart, and spoke, in accents of the kindest compassion, not indeed with an audible voice, but with the sweet whispers of his Spirit, "I will; be thou clean." In that moment you felt the storm which had raged within hushed to silence, and all was calm and peace, and you sank down into the arms of your heavenly Father, saying, from the very depths of the soul, "Thy will, which is my sanctification, be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

Did you doubt in that moment but that God had accomplished the work of holiness in your heart? No, you did not. Wherefore? Because the Holy Spirit had taken the things of Christ and given them to you, and you could but rejoice in the things that you had received; and you no more doubted that these blessings—the blessings of peace, of love, and joy in the Holy Ghost, came from God, than you did of your own existence. What brought this assurance? It was the "Spirit of *truth*," which cannot lie or deceive any of God's people. It was this that overshadowed you, that penetrated into the depths of the soul, and that brought up

from thence, first, a “hungering and thirsting after righteousness,—a longing desire after this very kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost,” creating within your heart a resolute determination that you would devote yourself hereafter exclusively to the service of Almighty God. Have you ever either repented of this entire consecration of soul and body, time and substance, to God, or seriously doubted the reality of the work? No, indeed!

But this evidence, what is it? I cannot conceive of any evidence distinct and apart from that which accompanies, and therefore is inseparably connected with, the operations of the Holy Spirit upon the heart. What other evidence do we need that the sun shines than that which the sun itself brings, by the darting of its own rays upon the world? Light up a candle in a dark room. Does not the light bring an evidence, to all that see it, that it shines, and consequently that the candle burns? And what would you, my dear M., think of a man that should ask, in the midst of this glare of light, for an evidence distinct and apart from that light itself, that the candle burns, and that its rays are diffused through the room? Would you not conclude that he asked for an impossibility? Or, at least, that he wanted a superfluity of evi-

dence? Would you not tell him to open his eyes, and see the light for himself, and then if he doubted its existence, he must continue in his skepticism? Surely argument would be lost on such an unreasonable man.

Just so, when God shines upon the soul by the Holy Spirit, He brings an evidence of himself, that he is there. When the "Sun of righteousness rises on the soul with healing in his wings," disperses the clouds of ignorance from the understanding, removes sin from the heart, and sheds abroad Divine love there,—He brings an evidence clear and strong, that he shines upon his own work, that the Divine Spirit has "wrought a perfect cure," and that he himself now "inhabits there." He is his own best evidence. When he works he does his work to such perfection, that it bears an impress of the Divine hand. When he speaks to the soul in accents of love, and says, "It is I: be not afraid," the sanctified soul recognizes the voice of his Lord and Master, and cries out, in the rapturous language of faith and love, "My Lord and my God!" "My beloved is mine, and I am his." "He has brought me into his banqueting-house, and his banner over me is love."

This is the evidence, the internal evidence spoken to the inmost soul, by the sweet voice

of that Spirit of TRUTH which Jesus Christ promised to his disciples, and which should be with them forever. He shines by his own rays, and they bring an evidence clear, strong, and undeniable, of his own presence, make an impression upon the soul of his own image, and write in legible characters his

“New best name of love”

upon the heart ; and when this is done, the sanctified soul looks up by faith, and “beholds the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ.”

Is not this, my dear M., your experience ? Did you ask for any other evidence that you were “cleansed from all unrighteousness,” than what the Divine Spirit brought to your heart in that very moment when he descended into your soul, and which was accompanied with a

“Peace unknown to sensual minds ?”

When we “dwell in love, we dwell in God, and God in us,” and where he is, he always brings an evidence of himself, and we cannot mistake his powerful, convincing voice, the shinings of his glory, the whispers of his Spirit, the feelings of his love, for the deceitful voice of Satan, the darkness of error and sin, and the feelings of hatred and envy.

Did you, my dear M., ever read attentively the 590th hymn, in which the poet describes the feelings of a soul determined to rely on the promises of God, however impossible their fulfilment might appear to human reason? After leading the confiding soul along in the path of faith, and teaching him to sing—

“Though earth and hell the word gainsay,
The word of God can never fail,”

he puts the following words into his mouth, and makes him sing most delightfully and triumphantly the song of deliverance from sin, and asserts the evidence of it as contained in his image which the Spirit of God had stamped on his heart:—

“When thou the work of faith hast wrought,
I HERE shall in thine IMAGE SHINE,
Nor SIN in deed, or word, or thought;
Let men exclaim, and fiends repine,
They cannot break the firm decree,—
ALL *things* are POSSIBLE to me.”

Our hymns upon this subject are so numerous, and so fully prove the point under consideration respecting the witness of the Spirit, as well as its nature and fruits, that I can hardly quote amiss. Take the following as a sample among the many which you may find scattered up and down in the book, but more especially under the head, “For Full Redemption,” and to which

I refer with the more pleasure, because I know that you, my dear M., delight to familiarize yourself with those Scriptural, deeply experimental, and lively devotional compositions ; and likewise with a mournful fear that too many of our people either never read or sing them at all, or else look at them so slightly that they neither understand nor feel their solemn import. The following is the verse to which I refer :—

“ MY PEACE, my LIFE, my COMFORT thou,
My treasure and my all THOU ART !
True WITNESS of my sonship, now
ENGRAVING PARDON ON MY HEART,—
Seal of my sins in Christ forgiven,
Earnest of love, and PLEDGE OF HEAVEN.”

The following is yet more in point :—

“ Thy WITNESS with my spirit bear
That God, my God, INHABITS there ;
Thou, with the Father and the Son,
Eternal life's co-eval beam,
Be Christ IN ME, and I in him,
Till PERFECT we are made in one.”

May our most merciful Father give you and me, and all who read these lines, that *peace*, that *life*, that *comfort*, which arise from this *witness*, that God *inhabits* in our hearts, and makes us *perfect* in LOVE.

LETTER XVI.

Its indirect evidence—The fruits of the Spirit—Love to God and man—Poetry—Joy—The nature of holy joy—Not always rapturous—But submits to God's will—Rejoices in tribulation—Sentiment sustained by poetry—All things work for good—Nothing will separate such a soul from God—Poetry quoted.

MY DEAR M——: In addition to the direct witness of the Holy Spirit to the heart, which always accompanies the work of sanctification, there is inseparably connected with this the fruits of the Spirit. These fruits cannot appear unless the Spirit itself be present to produce them, any more than there can be a stream of water issuing from a dried-up fountain, or fruit upon a dead tree. If, therefore, we have the fruits, we may take it for granted that we have the Spirit, as *this* is the cause of *those*, and the effect cannot be unless its cause be present to produce it.

These fruits are enumerated in Gal. v, 22, 23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," and such is the excellence of these fruits, that the apostle says, "Against such there is no law," either human or divine.

Let us examine these fruits. LOVE to God and man. Love assimilates us into the likeness

of God, for "God is love," and he that "dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." This lovely fruit adorns the sanctified soul throughout, and makes him appear like God, as his visible representative among men. And is not love one of the most pleasant passions of the human soul? "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour." If I truly love my neighbour I cannot designedly do him an injury; on the contrary, I shall do him all the good in my power. Love also knits all those hearts together which possess it, and creates an indescribable union of spirit, which is more sensibly felt than easily expressed. So likewise those who have this love to God, cannot violate his commandments, nor do anything with a design to injure his cause, or to sully the glory of his holy character. Hence the poet teaches us to sing,—

"O grant that nothing in my soul
May dwell but thy pure love alone;
O may thy love possess me whole,
My joy, my treasure, and my crown;
Strange flames far from my heart remove:
My every act, word, thought, be LOVE.

"O LOVE, how cheering is thy ray!
All pain before thy presence flies;
Care, anguish, sorrow, melt away,
Where'er thy healing beams arise.
O Jesus, nothing may I see—
Nothing desire or seek, but thee."

The poet identifies *Jesus* and *love*, declaring that he who has the one has the other also, for—

“JESUS AND LOVE ARE ONE.”

And this love is begotten in the soul by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, for the “love of God is spread abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost.”

The next fruit is JOY. “Ask,” says the Saviour, “that your joy may be full.” This joy, which is a fruit of the Spirit, is of the purest kind, comes from the purest source, and mingles with the purest minds. It is not always of that ecstatic, transporting character which carries its possessor away into the “third heavens,” and makes him almost forget, for the time being, that he is in the body; for though sometimes his soul is thus elevated and elated, yet at other times he is oppressed with sorrow, burdened with crosses and disappointment, and is “in heaviness, through temptation.” His joy arises principally from a belief that the will of God is accomplished, or is accomplishing in him. To this will he bows down with calm submission, knowing that, as he is God’s child, nothing, great nor little, shall befall him but what is under the direction of infinite wisdom and good-

ness, and that, consequently, "all things shall work together for his good."

While in this frame of mind he can "count it all joy when he falls into divers temptations, knowing that the trial of his faith worketh patience." It requires, indeed, some experience in Divine things—an experience acquired by learning many lessons in the school of Christ—to enable us to "rejoice in tribulation;" yet the sanctified Christian will find, as he perseveres in the way, that even these temptations, from whatever source they may arise, and with whatever malignity they may be hurled at him, will all tend to test and purify his faith, to try his grace and improve his patience, and to pare off the rough edges of "peevish nature," and thus to make him shine the brighter in the kingdom of God. In this, therefore, he rejoices, not indeed on account of the pain he feels—for "pain," under any circumstances, "is perfect misery,"—but because of the happy results of the fiery trial through which he is called to pass. He can therefore sing with a joyful heart,—

"Though friends should all fail, and foes all unite,
Yet one thing assures me, whatever betide,
The promise assures me the Lord will provide."

The poet has expressed this state of mind most admirably in the following verse:—

“ Yes, Lord, I shall see the bliss of thine own ,
 Thy secret to me shall soon be made known ,
 For sorrow and *sadness* I JOY shall receive,
 And share in the GLADNESS of all that believe.”

Yes,

“ While in AFFLICTION'S FURNACE.
 And PASSING through the FIRE,
 Thy LOVE we PRAISE which knows no days,
 And ever brings us nigher ;
 We clap our HANDS EXULTING,
 In thine Almighty favour,
 The LOVE DIVINE, which made us thine,
 Can keep us thine forever.”

Read, my dear M., the two hymns from which I have quoted, the first on the 246th page, and the second beginning on the 239th page, old edition, and see if you will not be tempted to sing them with a joyful heart and a triumphant faith, as expressive of your own experience, at least in some stages of its progress in the way of holiness. Have you not often felt, even since your emancipation from the galling yoke of inbred sin, your heart penetrated with sorrow, your spirit pierced with grief, and your whole soul oppressed with a burden for which you could hardly account ; and yet, in the midst of all these clouds which hovered around you, and for the moment darkened your sky, you would inwardly rejoice in God your Saviour, and sing with our deeply experienced poet,—

“ By faith we see the glory
 To which thou shalt restore us,

The cross despise for that high prize
Which thou hast set before us !"

And when the Lord had brought you through the furnace, placed your feet on a broad place, dispersed the clouds which hung lowering in your spiritual horizon, by the rising of the bright beams of the "Sun of righteousness," did you not look back with joyful gratitude to God for giving you grace to sustain you under the pressure you felt; and do you not even *now* feel a glow of unutterable pleasure spring up and overflow your heart at the remembrance of "all the way in which the Lord hath led you?" I know you do. And not only so—you feel your faith strengthened, your courage invigorated, your love expanded, and your hope confirmed, and even your joy increased, by this very conflict; and you can now trust in God with a firmer purpose than before, while you look forward with the most exquisite delight, anticipating an "abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of God." Faith now says, with unwavering confidence,—

"Peace, troubled soul, thou need'st not fear,
Thy great Provider still is near:
Who fed thee last will feed thee still,
Be CALM, and sink into His WILL."

Thus you can "rejoice in the Lord always,"—because you know you "love God," and there-

fore “all things,”—all your crosses and disappointments, temptations, even your own infirmities, not excluding the sins of your enemies, and much more all your blessings, the society of the friends of Jesus, their prayers, preaching, and conversation, and ten thousand nameless blessings, which come upon you daily, from moment to moment, and often unasked for—for “God is able to give you abundantly more than you can ask or think,”—all these things “*shall work TOGETHER for your good!*”

What a catalogue of blessings we have enumerated! They come, all couched together in this ample promise of God, like a cluster of golden coins, and fill the coffer of the heart with the richest gems of God’s spiritual kingdom. With such a comprehensive promise as this on which to hang our faith, I am sure we can joy and rejoice evermore in God our Saviour, and—

“Praise him for all that is past,
And trust him for all that’s to come.”

If ALL these things shall work TOGETHER, shall co-operate one with another, and mutually assist each other in “working out our salvation,” then most assuredly we have the most abundant reason to rejoice and be glad all the days of our lives. If “not a hair of our head shall fall to

the ground without our heavenly Father's notice,"—so that nothing great or small shall happen to us but what is under the direction of his all-wise, all-powerful, all-loving, beneficent hand—how can we repine—how can we be discontented with our lot—how can we complain of any of his dealings—how, in a word, can we refrain from REJOICING that we are in the hands of such a benevolent "Father of our spirits?"

With this view of the subject, is it any wonder that the Apostle Paul adopted that triumphant language which is found in Romans viii, 33–39, in which he says, among other words of the strongest faith, "Nay, in all these things we are MORE than conquerors THROUGH HIM THAT LOVED US. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to SEPARATE US from the LOVE OF GOD WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS." With such a persuasion as this, founded as it is upon the immutable promise of God, and confirmed in the hands of such a Mediator as is Jesus Christ, and assured to the heart of the sanctified believer by the sealing testimony of the Holy Spirit, of which the apostle had spoken in the previous part of this chapter,—I say, with such a persuasion,

founded upon such a promise, namely, that “all things shall work together for our good,” we certainly can, nay, *must* “REJOICE in hope of the glory of God.”

With a well-founded persuasion that none of the things enumerated by the apostle shall be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, we may patiently bear all things, however grievous to flesh and blood; we may, believing, hope for all things, and joyfully anticipate a happy issue to all the events of God’s providence, whether adverse or prosperous, and calmly submit ourselves to his guidance in every state of our lives, knowing that they are all directed by a hand that cannot err.

This subject is so copious, and my heart so full of it, that I hardly know how to stop; but the length of this letter admonishes me that I must bring it to a close, which I will endeavour to do by asking you, my dear M., to sing the following well-known and often repeated lines of Charles Wesley, which are so applicable to the subject under consideration:—

“REJOICING NOW in earnest hope,
I STAND, and from the MOUNTAIN TOP
See all the land BELOW;
Rivers of milk and honey rise,
And all the fruits of paradise
In endless plenty grow.”

With this triumphant song trembling upon your lips, you may lie down to rest in peace, and rise up in the morning with the following words issuing from your glad heart, and flowing from your joyful tongue :—

“ Rising to sing my Saviour’s praise,
Thee may I publish all day long .
And let thy precious word of grace
Flow from my heart and fill my tongue ;
Full all my life with PUREST LOVE,
And join me to the Church above.”

LETTER XVII.

Meekness another fruit of the Spirit—Meekness and gentleness explained—Opposed to hardness—Meekness makes a person gentle and docile—Poetry—Temperance explained—Includes a proper government of all our appetites and passions—Such a person participates of all the good things of life with thankfulness—The Great God stoops to man—Poetry quoted.

MY DEAR M—— : The next fruit of the Spirit mentioned by the apostle is MEEKNESS. The radical meaning of the word from which this is translated is, to *pound* or *bruise*, and hence it describes a certain softness or mellowness of mind, produced by the internal operation of the Holy Spirit, which makes the mind yield with facility to the impressions of truth. It stands, therefore, opposed to a certain stiffness or rough-

ness of mind which appears in an unenlightened and uncultivated understanding—which refuses to bow to truth, however forcibly expressed, and which unfits a man to be an agreeable member of society ; so stiff, indeed, is he, that he will break before he will bend.

The two persons—the one that is meek and lowly, and the one that is stiff and lofty—may be fitly compared to the green and the dry trees. While the former takes deep root in the earth, whence it derives sap and nourishment, and thence grows thriftily, gently bends to the breeze, so that every blast only tends to fasten its roots still deeper in the earth, and thus adds to its strength and thriftiness, the dead tree, standing stiff and unyielding, receives the blast, breaks instead of bending, and falls prostrate to the ground. Just so the man whose heart is the seat of sanctifying grace. He is firmly “rooted and grounded in Christ Jesus,” and from him he receives daily supplies of grace and truth, by which his soul is nourished and strengthened ; and while the blasts of temptation may fall heavily upon him, he may occasionally reel to and fro, while his soul, fixed upon the Rock of Ages, remains “steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord ;” and he derives spiritual benefit from everything he hears,

sees, or experiences, whether it be from friend or foe. In the midst of all these things, he meekly bows to the dictates of unerring Wisdom, receiving instruction from every source, whether it come from above or beneath, whether from God or Satan.

Not so the dry, stiff Pharisee, or the lukewarm professor of religion. His heart, empty of the "meek and lowly mind" which was in Christ, and filled with vain and high conceits of himself, frets and chafes under disappointments, presents a stiff front to every antagonist, lifts his proud heart against the providence of God, until he is finally crushed beneath the frowns of a justly-incensed Deity. There is no other way for him to escape this sad catastrophe, but to "break up the fallow-ground of the heart, and sow no more among thorns"—let his heart be so mellowed that it will yield to the impressions of truth and goodness.

This meekness of mind differs from gentleness, which, though mentioned first, refers to the external deportment, while meekness refers to the internal disposition: so that a man who is meek is gentle—meekness qualifying him for that gentleness which distinguishes the refined, the sanctified Christian. These graces—the one working in the heart, the other showing itself in

the life—form a peculiar gracefulness of temper and demeanour, which commends the person on whom they sit in holy loveliness, as worthy of all praise, all confidence and love. Like Eve in Paradise, as described by Milton,—

“For softness she, and sweet attractive grace.”

The female especially who is adorned with these heavenly fruits, meekness and gentleness, shines in every circle in which she moves. Hence this “meek and quiet spirit,” being that “inward adorning” which the apostle Peter so highly commends, is so far preferable to the “outward adorning of plaiting”—or curling—“the hair, and of wearing of gold, or putting on” gay or costly “apparel.”

Do you not, my dear M., greatly prefer this inward adorning, exemplified in gentleness of deportment, to all the mere tinsel of fashionable ornaments—the empty frippery of the supercilious fop? I know you do, and therefore you sing so heartily the following lines,—Give me

“A heart resign’d, submissive, MEEK,
My great Redeemer’s throne,
Where only Christ is heard to speak,
Where Jesus reigns alone.”

It is thus that you obey the precept of Jesus Christ when he said, “Learn of me, for I am

MEEK and LOWLY of heart." He not only becomes an exemplar for our imitation, but he engages to work within us this heavenly disposition, by the internal energies of his Holy Spirit, moulding us into his own likeness, and stamping his image of meekness upon our hearts, so that we exemplify that spirit of tenderness of which the apostle speaks, when he tells the Thessalonians that he was "GENTLE among them, even as a nurse cherisheth her children."

In perfect conformity with this sentiment, the poet teaches us to sing as follows:—

"O that I, as a *little child*,
May follow thee, and never rest,
Till thou hast sweetly breathed thy MILD
And LOWLY mind into my breast;
Nor ever may we parted be,
Till I become ONE SPIRIT with thee!"

See a person thus adorned with meekness and gentleness moving around in the circle of obedience to the commandments of God, and mingling in the society of his friends! He is so far from exacting that strict attention to him which a sense of justice and propriety would seem to dictate, he takes offence at nothing, but pays all due respect and Christian courtesy to all; and though he sees and deplores, as keenly as any one else, the foibles of others, he hides them under the mantle of charity, and meekly submits

to whatever unavoidably arises out of the imperfections of human society—kindly apologizing for human infirmities, foibles, and even for what may appear wilful aberrations from the rules of propriety.

The last fruit mentioned in the catalogue of Christian graces is TEMPERANCE, which includes a right use of all the creatures of God. The legitimate meaning of this word is *government*, and it implies that he who has it has a strict and suitable government over all the passions and appetites of his soul and body; so much so that none of these are permitted to usurp dominion over him. His sanctified heart and enlightened understanding having mounted the throne, under their dictation he exercises a controlling influence over all his passions and appetites, keeping them in subjection to the dominion of grace—the grace of sanctification—so that, instead of being a slave to them, he makes them his servants, and while they obey his commands, they administer to his pleasure, and advance his temporal and spiritual interests. His passions of love, hate, desire, aversion, all his affinities and antipathies, of whatever sort or degree, his fears and hopes, are all sanctified, fixed on their right objects, and directed to their right ends. He loves God and man, and hates sin, and nothing

else. He desires whatever is lawful and right, and has an aversion to whatever is unlawful and wrong. His affinities attach him to all who are of a kindred spirit with himself, feeling himself connected with them in the strongest bonds of the most refined friendship; while his antipathies are directed against—not, indeed, with an angry feeling, leading to hostile acts—all those who are actuated by a spirit of malice and revenge; while, at the same time, he mourns over them with the feelings of pity and love. Thus are all the passions of his nature sanctified, and made subservient to his highest, most holy, and most enduring interests—not excepting his ambition, which is now directed to the loftiest aims, impelling him forward in the conscientious use of all the means within his grasp for the attainment of God's glory, in his own and the salvation of his fellow-men. Hence he sings the following lines of the poet, from the very depths of his soul:—

“Whate’er my sinful flesh requires,
For thee I cheerfully forego;
My COVETOUS and VAIN DESIRES,
My hopes of happiness below;
My senses’ and my PASSIONS’ food,
And all my thirst for creature good.”

And as to his bodily appetites, they are regulated “by reason and by grace.” He eats that

sort and quantity of food which will best promote his health and strength, and drinks water, tea, or coffee, to satisfy his thirst, and wears those clothes which will make him the most comfortable, and inhabits as good a house, and keeps as warm a fire in winter, as his means will allow ; but he can no more indulge in any of these things to excess, nor run in debt, and thereby live upon other people's money, for the sake of "needless self-indulgence," than he can swear profanely, or lie to and cheat his neighbour. Within these bounds, the sanctified Christian is permitted to enjoy all the good things of this life as fully and freely as any one else ; and he has this advantage over others, namely, that he receives them all as the gifts of his heavenly Father, and therefore to be "used with thanksgiving, being sanctified by the word of God and prayer."

Nay, I think the holy man participates in all the blessings of life with a much more exquisite zest than he otherwise could, or than the unholy sinner can. The grace of sanctification has regulated all his appetites, fixed them on right objects, and taught him to select the most suitable means for their reasonable gratification ; so that whenever he partakes of any of the temporal blessings of life, he knows that he is obeying God, for "whether he eats or drinks, or what-

soever he does, he does all for the glory of God ;" and hence he eats and drinks, and enjoys all the comforts of life, with a glad and thankful heart, ascribing all the glory of these things to God, to whom alone it is due.

Whenever he walks abroad upon the earth, and sees the rich variety of fruits and vegetables, the blooming flowers of spring, the rose and the lily, and a thousand other beautiful flowers, whose scent perfumes the air—the fields waving with wheat and other grains—the meadows carpeted with grass—and all for the benefit, the sustenance, and comfort of man and beast—how does his heart glow with gratitude to the Author and Giver of all these things ! Nor is he content with gazing upon the earth, but lifts his wondering eyes to the heavens, where he sees, with inexpressible delight, the "sun shining in his strength," and, in the night, the azure vault decked with innumerable stars, and the moon shedding her silvery rays across the firmament, and thence to the earth, to light up the path for man. * While beholding this magnificent canopy over his head, and this dazzling glory surrounding him on every side, he cries out with rapture, in the sublime language of the Psalmist, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy work ; day unto day

uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge."

"Eternal Wisdom ! thee we praise,
Thee thy creation sings ;
With thy loved name rocks, hills, and seas,
And heaven's high palace, rings.

"Thy hand, how wide it spreads the sky !
How glorious to behold !
Tinged with a blue of heavenly dye,
And starr'd with sparkling gold.

"There thou hast bid the globes of light
Their endless circuits run ;
There the pale planets rule the night,
The day obeys the sun."

And yet, my dear M., this God, so great above our thoughts,—that made, governs, and guides all these mighty "globes of light,"—deigns to come down to little, insignificant man, to commune with his heart ; to make it, in fact, his own temple ! So sweetly sings our poet :—

"High throned on heaven's eternal hill,
In number, weight, and measure, still
Thou sweetly orderest all that is ;
And yet thou deign'st to COME TO ME,
And GUIDE MY STEPS, that I, with THEE
Enthroned, may reign in ENDLESS BLISS."

May God speak these words to the heart of my friend, that it may bound in thanksgiving to God ; and believing in his particular care, may it confidently repose on him in every circumstance of life, whether it be prosperous or adverse.

LETTER XVIII.

These graces viewed in a cluster—From perfect love issues joy, peace, long-suffering—Gentleness and meekness—Temperance and fidelity—Heart emptied of anger and every evil temper—If those who indulge in impatience profess this blessing they are deceived—How to deal with such persons—But all are not deceived—Humility the characteristic of the sanctified soul—An appeal to M. for the truth advanced—Illustrated from Charles Wesley's poetry.

MY DEAR M—— : We have seen how the fruits of the Spirit adorn the sanctified Christian, and make him appear altogether lovely to the eye of every spiritual beholder. Let us endeavour to view these graces in a cluster, woven, as it were, together in a beautiful garment, not indeed of "many colours," but so intermixed that they will sweetly blend in each other, so as to form one harmonious robe, which will cover the holy man from head to foot, that he may appear "like the king's daughter," not only all glorious within, but also outwardly "without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing."

In the first place, LOVE sits at the head, as queen of the graces, leading her fair daughters, "joy, peace, long-suffering," &c., in the beautiful train; while TEMPERANCE closes the line with her growing influence over all the minor graces, and sets them off to the greatest possible ad-

vantage, making them all keep their proper places, doing obeisance to their divine Head and Master, the Lord Jesus Christ.

From this "perfect love," which exists in the sanctified soul as a living fountain, issues JOY in the Holy Ghost, the soul "rejoicing evermore," even in the midst of sorrows, temptations, crosses, and disappointments; while PEACE sits calmly in the depths of the heart, amidst all the turbulence raging round about him; and LONG-SUFFERING comes in to aid in maintaining an equilibrium in the soul, while attracted this way and that by contrary forces; then, when upon the point of yielding to a fit of temporary impatience, in steps GENTLENESS, guided by MEEKNESS, and by her soft and winning voice soothes all the passions to submission to the dictates of GOODNESS, teaching them all the happy art of working in harmony one with the other, regulating the whole with kind reciprocity of feeling, and interchanging offices of friendship, and creating within the soul the sweetest harmony of mutual attraction and co-operation,—FIDELITY guiding and applying all the energies of the sanctified soul to the specific object for which God has called us from "darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God."

Thus is the heart emptied of anger, evil desire,

and every unholy affection, and garnished with these heavenly graces of the Holy Spirit ; while the person so adorned and beautified with these exhibits in his external deportment all the consistency which arises from a symmetry of character, formed by the Hand of the Master Workman. From the internal fountain of the heart, continually fed from the perennial Fountain of all goodness, all wisdom, all power, and all love, flow out unceasingly those pure streams of "peace and joy in the Holy Ghost," which keep the wheels of life in perpetual activity ; so that the person thus furnished moves around in the circle of obedience to the commands of God, striving, "as far as possible, to live peaceably," doing good, according to his power, to all men, both to their souls and bodies, using all possible means to "please his neighbour for his good to edification" and salvation.

Now allowing the truth of this representation—that it is a real, and not a fanciful picture—the objection which I have often heard made against those who profess this blessing of sanctification, that they are proud, hasty, easily offended, impatient, &c., has no foundation in truth. How can a person that is *meek* and *gentle*—which implies, and necessarily includes, the deepest *humility*—be at the same time *proud*

and impatient, seeing these virtues and vices are antipodes to each other? That there may be those who profess the blessing, who exhibit those unholy tempers, I allow. What is the consequence? They are deceived. They either act the hypocrite, or are mistaken in their experience. If the former, there is little hope in their case, for "the hope of the hypocrite shall perish." And of all characters in the world, a hypocritical professor of religion is the most to be dreaded. If the latter, a little friendly conversation, conducted in the true spirit of Christianity, with that humility that the objector so much commends, and that brotherly kindness in which he thinks his fellow-professor is wanting, may set him right, by convincing him of his error, which, when convinced of it, no one will be more ready to acknowledge, bewail, and rectify, than the sincere Christian. But do not let him, for his own sake, as well as for the sake of the person he suspects, approach him with a lordly dictation, or denounce him with a harsh dogmatism, as though he were sent to "lord it over God's heritage," and to determine *ex cathedra*, as with unerring certainty, on the states of all with whom he may come in contact, lest he betray that very pride he professes so much to abhor, and so severely to condemn in others;

but let him go rather in the spirit of humility, and, with the utmost tenderness, enter into a familiar Christian conversation with the person concerned, convince him by his spirit and manner that he seeks his good, and not merely tantalize him with critical inquiries. In this way, if sincerity preside in both their hearts, he may be instrumental of "converting a sinner from the error of his ways, and of hiding," or cancelling, "a multitude of sins."

But I cannot allow that all who profess this blessing give evidence of their deception by an exhibition of the marks of pride and impatience. That which may be taken for pride may be nothing more than a just indignation at sin, at littleness of soul, at absurdity, and probably at the petulance displayed by the fastidious critic, all of which loudly calls for the reprobation, with suitable language and gesture, of the holy, well-informed Christian. Jesus Christ himself, though among the meekest of men, and who proved his humility by condescending to take "upon him the form of a servant, and become obedient to death, even the death of the cross," rebuked the hypocritical lawyers and Pharisees with the utmost sternness, manifested his abhorrence of the wickedness of Herod, by calling him a "fox," and denounced the just judgments of God upon

that “wicked and adulterous generation,” while he turned away from the Sanhedrim in the synagogue, who were watching him for evil, “with anger,” that is, a just indignation, “being grieved for the hardness of their hearts.” No doubt his enemies thought him a proud heretic because he would not stoop to humour their prejudices, but strongly rebuked them for their obstinacy, their pride, and arrogancy.

At any rate, humility, a humiliating view of himself, of his gifts and attainments—that humility which disclaims all merit in anything he has done, does, or may do; that humility which excludes all boasting, except in the cross of Christ—which keeps him low at the feet of Jesus—which annihilates self in view of the ineffable glory of God; yea, that humility which makes him actually feel “less than the least of all God’s saints”—which makes him willing to wash the feet of the saints, or to do the meanest offices for any of God’s people, and teaches him to prefer others before himself—*this* humility distinguishes the sanctified Christian, and shines out in all his words and actions.

Do you not, my dear M., know this to be true by your own experience? When the Lord appeared for your deliverance, did you not feel the depth and reality of those words of the poet,

which he puts into the mouth of a soul panting after this "second rest?"

"Open my faith's interior eye ;
Display THY GLORY from above ;
And all I AM shall SINK and die,
Lost in ASTONISHMENT AND LOVE."

Yes, when the "interior eye" of the mind is so fully opened as to see clearly the depth of that pollution which cleaves to the soul, and at the same time to behold the ineffable "glory from above," which surrounds the Godhead of Jesus Christ, a ray of which is now darted down into the labouring soul, the contrast is so great that we sink down and sing,—

"As less than nothing in his sight,
And feel that Christ is all in all."

In all such the prayer in the following lines is answered :—

"Save me from PRIDE, the PLAGUE EXPEL ;
Jesus, thine HUMBLE self impart ;
O let thy mind within me dwell,
O give me LOWLINESS of heart."

"Sprinkle me, Saviour, with thy blood,
And all thy GENTLENESS is MINE."

Did you ever feel less in your own estimation, more unworthy, more helpless, more undeserving of the least notice of God's compassionate eye, than you did in that moment when the Lord took your feet from the mire and clay in which

you felt yourself sinking deeper and deeper every step you took, and placed them upon the Rock of Ages? And have you not continued ever since, in the same spirit of humility, singing, as you sung at the first moment of your participation of this blessing, the following expressive language of our favourite poet?

“ Confound, o’erpower me by thy grace ;
 I would be by MYSELF ABHORR’D :
 ALL might, ALL majesty, ALL praise,
 ALL GLORY be to Christ my Lord.”

O how do these words thrill in the heart of the sanctified believer! He sings—yes, you, my dear M., sing them with an increasing delight, because they so exactly express the feelings of your humble heart; and just so long as you continue to enjoy this inestimable blessing, you will continue their use, from a feeling sense of their truth and adaptedness to your condition.

In the next verse you will perceive the poet’s idea of Christian perfection. Hear him, or rather sing him, and the next time I have the pleasure of seeing you, I must ask the favour of your singing those two, and the following verse for my edification:—

“ Now let me gain *perfection’s* HEIGHT ;
 Now let ME into *nothing* fall,
 As less than nothing in thy sight,
 And feel that Christ IS ALL IN ALL.”

With these words I bid you adieu for the present, by simply adding my earnest prayer, that you may lie down and rise up protected by the everlasting arms.

LETTER XIX.

External evidence—Keeping the commandments—The sanctified soul must do more than the letter of the law demands—He must feed the poor, &c.—The spirit of the law may require this, but the letter does not—The sacred Scriptures explicit on this subject—Many ignorantly transgress—This shows the necessity of the atonement—Salvation, from first to last, of grace—Proved from Scripture and our hymns.

MY DEAR M—— : Having attended to the direct and indirect evidence of entire sanctification, both of which relate principally to the person himself—though visibly manifested to others in the spirit and general demeanour—it remains only to consider the external evidence, called keeping the commandments of God.

Though there has been some controversy upon this branch of the subject, yet it has arisen more, I apprehend, from a misunderstanding in the use of terms, than from any radical difference of opinion as to the real thing itself. All will agree, I think, that no sanctified soul can wilfully violate any precept of the moral code as expressed in the ten commandments, as this

“law is written upon the heart, and imprinted upon the inward parts,” the whole of which is comprehended by our Divine Teacher, in *loving God with all the heart, and our neighbour as ourselves*. And who will say that there is any necessity for such a soul—thus made holy, in which the love of God and man reigns predominant—to have any *other gods* besides the *one living and true God*—to *bow down to idols*—to *take the name of God in vain*—to *violate the Sabbath*—to *dishonour his father or mother*—to *kill unlawfully*—to *commit adultery*—to *steal*—to *bear false witness*—to *covet* that which is not his own? This is the *letter* of the law, and surely an unconverted man may refrain from a violating its *letter* in any of his outward conduct. But when the heart has been circumcised by the sword of God’s Spirit—by that Spirit which “pierceth to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit,” the joints of the harness, “and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart”—so that we love God with all the heart, and our neighbour as ourselves, we are qualified to obey this law in its *spirit and design*.

Indeed, if we examine the subject with careful attention, we shall find, I presume to believe, that the holy Christian is required to do more

than the mere *letter* of this law requires. Where is it said in any precept of this law, You shall feed the poor, clothe the naked, visit the sick and those that are in prison, take up the cross, mortify the deeds of the flesh? Where is the minister of the sanctuary commanded to go and preach the Gospel to every creature? And where in this law are the thousands of benevolent institutions recognized, which are springing up every day, and which grow out of the prolific soil which is prepared, watered, and fructified by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and kept fruitful by the rich supplies of sanctifying grace?

If any say that these are all implied or included in the *spirit* of the law, as interpreted by our Saviour, I contend not—be it so. But then such must allow that holy Christians exemplify in their spirit and conduct this spirituality of the law, or else deny that the good works above enumerated are performed. To do the latter they will not attempt, and therefore they must admit that “all the law is fulfilled in this one word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” And surely if this Divine love occupies the heart—and it unquestionably does if the heart be filled with “perfect love”—that heart is perpetually “devising liberal things” for the benefit of his neighbour, and is also con-

stantly flowing out in love, praise, and thanksgiving to God, crying out in the language of David, "O how I love thy law! It is my meditation by day and night. It is sweeter to me than the honey descending from the honeycomb."

On no point of Christian practice are the sacred Scriptures more plain and full than they are upon this. "He that saith he loveth God, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar," saith St. John, who, though his heart was full of love, so much so, that it constantly overflowed with words and streams of love towards all men, in these words expressed himself with unusual bluntness and honest boldness. And what would be said of a man professing holiness of heart, should he indulge himself in idolatry, in lying or stealing, and in breaking the Sabbath, in covetousness, or in wilfully violating any other precept of this moral code? Would he not be denounced a hypocrite? Would you, my dear M., admit such a professor as your associate? Would you not rather repel him with just indignation, as unfit for the society of holy Christians? If your kind nature would not permit you to go thus far, I think your love to his soul, your keen sense of consistency of character, would impel you to endeavour to convince him

of his error, to open his eyes, that he might see the awful gulf yawning before him ; and you would exhort him to fly from it before it swallowed him up—to look to Jesus for the pardon of his sins, and then for such a sanctification of his nature as should conform him to the image of God—which image is shadowed forth in that law which the apostle pronounces “ holy, just, and good.”

I have said no sanctified Christian can *wilfully* violate any precept of this moral code. That such a man may *ignorantly* transgress it, I allow, this ignorance arising out of the infirmities of his nature, and therefore inseparable from humanity. Thus a man may conceive erroneously of God, and may, therefore, through this misconception, be guilty of a species of idolatry ; or he may, through ignorance of the fact, tell a falsehood, while he thinks he is speaking the truth—and in a thousand other instances he may innocently—provided he has taken all due pains to ascertain the truth, and an accurate knowledge of his duty—violate any precept of this law, in its spirit and design ; and were it not for the blood of atonement, and the continual intercession of the Lord Jesus, he would stand condemned, for the law knows no mercy, and has made no provision for pardon

and purification. Every soul, therefore, the holiest not excepted, must say in truth,

“Every moment, Lord, I need
The merit of thy death.”

But he can say, with equal certainty, in view of the meritorious death and perpetual intercession of the Lord Jesus,—

“One only gift can JUSTIFY
The boasting soul that knows his God ;
When JESUS DOTH HIS BLOOD APPLY,
I glory in his SPRINKLED BLOOD. •
The Lord my Righteousness I praise,
I triumph in the love divine,
The wisdom, wealth, and strength of grace,
In CHRIST TO ENDLESS AGES MINE.”

Through this medium, through the merits and strength of Christ, he receives not only atonement for his past wilful transgressions—that is, whenever he repents and believes—and for his present sins of ignorance, but also supernatural strength to enable him to keep the law with an upright and sincere heart, for “the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.”

There is another error to be guarded against in the discussion of this subject, and this is, *That the keeping of the moral law is not a condition of either justification or sanctification.*

We are justified and sanctified, and also kept in a state of justification and sanctification, by

GRACE, through *faith* in the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no truth more frequently insisted upon or more prominently set forth in the Holy Scriptures than this, namely,—

That our salvation, from beginning to end, in its most incipient stage, through every step of its progress, from conviction of sin to pardon, and from that to full sanctification, and then onward in the way of holiness, until we arrive to the kingdom of eternal glory, is all of GRACE—the rich, abounding GRACE OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS—so that every soul that is or shall be so unspeakably happy as to arrive at that consummation of glory, will “bring forth the head-stone thereof, shouting, GRACE, GRACE unto it!” So our poet teaches us to sing with the sweetest melody, while our hearts are set in tune by the oil of redeeming and sanctifying grace :—

“ Father, God, thy love we praise,
Which gave thy Son to die ;
Jesus, full of truth and GRACE,
Alike we GLORIFY :
Spirit, Comforter divine,
Praise by all to thee be given,
Till we in FULL CHORUS join,
And earth is TURN'D TO HEAVEN.”

Turn, my dear M., to the 292d hymn, old collection, and you will see in what “sweet accord” and “choral symphonies” that evangelical poet teaches us to ascribe our salvation from sin

here, and our admittance into the kingdom of God hereafter, to “the God of truth and grace,” and how sweetly and delightfully he blends the praise of those below with those above, to

“The mystic Three in One.”

But this grace of God in Christ Jesus occupying the heart, filling it full of Divine love, and this love becoming the moving, ruling principle of action, not only the motive is pure, but the actions flowing therefrom are pure also, perfectly conformable, so far as knowledge is concerned, to the precepts of God’s moral law. Hence he prays,—

“Thy NATURE be my LAW,
Thy SPOTLESS SANCTITY;
And sweetly every moment draw
My happy soul to thee.
SOUL OF MY SOUL, REMAIN !
Who didst for all fulfil,
In ME, O Lord, FULFIL AGAIN
Thy heavenly Father’s will.”

Can a soul in whom this prayer is answered, wilfully violate any known command of God ? No, indeed ! He would as soon enter into a league with Satan, and proclaim an eternal war against Jesus Christ, as to rise in opposition to this “law,” which is “God’s nature,” his “spotless sanctity,” and to which his purified soul is “sweetly every moment drawn.” The law of faith in Jesus Christ binds him to the throne of

God, and the law of "perfect love" conforms him to the Divine image, and these two great leading principles impel him forward in the path of obedience; so that his happy soul remains connected with the soul of God, as the poet expresses it, and the "will of God," which is his "sanctification," is fulfilled in him. He now says,—

"The sharpness of thy two-edged sword,
 Enable me to endure;
 Till bold to say, My hallowing Lord
 Hath wrought a PERFECT CURE.
 I see the exceeding BROAD COMMAND,
 Which *all contains in one*;
 Enlarge my heart to understand
 The mystery unknown."

I shall endeavour, in my next, to establish these views by unquestionable authority. In the mean time, permit me to say, and this shall conclude this long letter, that so long as you, my dear M., continue to exemplify the purity of your heart by the purity of your conduct, by keeping the commandments of God, and no longer, I will believe in your sincerity, and continue you my friendship, and address you in the language of the poet:—

"Come, let us ascend
 My companion and friend,
 To taste of the banquet above;
 If thy heart be as mine,
 If for Jesus it pine,
 Come up into the chariot of love."

LETTER XX.

God's laws practicable—Angelic and Adamic laws—Not binding on us—Moral law binding—Perpetual—Yet no unconverted sinner keeps it—Wesley's views of the law—Fletcher's—Clarke's—Watson's—Peck's—To these the author agrees—The Scripture testimony—Illustrated by poetry.

MY DEAR M—— : I think God never gave a law to any of his creatures that they could not keep, provided they availed themselves of the means he established to enable them to keep it. And he has manifested his wisdom and goodness in adapting his laws to the nature, capacities, and circumstances of the various orders of his intelligent and unintelligent creatures.

Thus he doubtless required and still requires of the holy angels, the most perfect unsinning obedience to him, of which their perfect natures and large capacities were capable ; and for ceasing to do this a part of them were thrown down to hell. To Adam, also, He gave a law which demanded a perfect obedience every way suited to his nature and capacity, which could have been nothing less than loving God with all his heart, and a manifestation of this love in every act of external obedience ; and so long as Adam continued thus to obey he stood “justified by the deeds of” that law under which he was placed.

But he sinned, and we all sinned in him, and have consequently “come short of the glory of God”—have cast ourselves off from the protection of his glorious power. Hence we are no longer under the Adamic covenant, which was a covenant of works, but are placed under a covenant of grace, confirmed in the hands of a Mediator. And until this Mediator should come, and make an atonement for sin by “the sacrifice of himself,” God substituted, for the time being, the sacrificial law, first successfully used by Abel, and subsequently practised by the patriarchs, until Moses came, and prescribed, under the direction of God, the whole ritual of the Jewish service. These sacrifices were intended to set forth the purity of God on the one hand, and the impurity and sinfulness of men on the other, and the necessity of an atonement for both wilful and involuntary sins, or sins of ignorance, in order to render the acts of worship acceptable. The whole of this was a remedial system, and derived all its efficacy from pointing to the Lord Jesus, who was to come as the great atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.

Now this law, with all its burdensome ceremonies, the people could, and the pious and conscientious among them did keep; and by keeping it according to its spirit and design,

were justified in the sight of God. I say the pious portion of the people did keep the ceremonial law. How were they made pious? Not by obedience to this law. Like Abraham, they were justified by faith. Like him, their hearts were renovated and sanctified by the internal operation of the Holy Spirit, applying the merits of the Lord Jesus, the promised Messiah, washing away their sins; and these were received by faith in his infinite atonement.

Well, then, to regulate their conduct, that they might furnish an irrefutable evidence of this purity of heart, God gave them the moral law, written upon two tables of stone,* the substance of which was engraven upon every sanctified heart by the Spirit of God himself, so that they could fulfil its precepts. This law is eternal in its obligations. While the angelic law is adapted to angels, and therefore only obligatory upon them; while the Adamic covenant was

* I do not say this was the *origin* of the moral law. This law is founded in the immutable nature and fitness of things—the nature of God and the nature of man—and prescribes what is fit and right, and therefore must be binding upon all rational intelligences; and hence all were bound by its precepts, as well before as after the giving of the law by Moses, and being thus founded, it can never be either repealed, or relax in its demands, so long as those relations exist to which it is suited. It was only then made known in legible characters, being inscribed on tables of stone.

suitcd to him in Paradise, as a holy, wise, and innocent man, and therefore ceases to be binding upon us as a condition of salvation; and while the ceremonial law of Moses, no longer needed, is utterly abolished by the coming of Christ, and therefore is binding upon no one,—the moral law remains, and will forever remain in all its force, and is therefore the rule by which all men are bound to regulate their conduct.

But do any keep it? “No mere man since the fall,” while in his unrenewed state, doth ever keep it, but “doth daily break it in thought, word, and deed;” and hence all such are condemned, and would remain forever condemned, were it not for the merciful interference of the Lord Jesus, the second Adam, who, whenever we believe in him as our almighty Redeemer and Saviour, brings us from under the curse of the law, and justifies us freely by his grace; and on condition of our “walking in the light, as he is in the light, cleanses us from all unrighteousness.” Now the sanctified Christian, having a new nature, a new principle of action, new motives to impel him forward, in consequence of Divine love reigning in his heart, is enabled to keep this law, by loving God with all his heart, and his neighbour as himself.

Let us now inquire if this be not according to the sentiments of our standard writers upon this subject. Thus Mr. Wesley, in his sermon on Matt. v, 17 to 29, after having explained the nature and obligations of the law, says:—

“From all this we may learn that there is no contrariety at all between the law and the Gospel; that there is no need for the law to pass away, in order to the establishing of the Gospel. Indeed, neither of them supercedes the other, but they agree perfectly well together. Yea, the very same words, considered in different respects, are parts both of the law and of the Gospel. If they are considered as commandments, they are parts of the law; if as promises, of the Gospel. Thus, ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,’ when considered as a commandment, is a branch of the law; when regarded as a promise, is an essential part of the Gospel; the Gospel being no other than the commands of the law, proposed by way of promise. There is, therefore, the closest connexion that can be conceived between the law and the Gospel. On the one hand, the law continually makes way for and points us to the Gospel; on the other, the Gospel continually leads us to a more exact fulfilling of the law.”

And in the latter part of the sermon, while drawing the contrast between the Pharisee and the Christian, he says:—

“But still the righteousness of a Christian exceeds all this righteousness of a Scribe or Pharisee, by fulfilling the *spirit* as well as the *letter* of the law; by inward as well as outward obedience. In this, in the *spirituality*

of it, it admits of no comparison. This is the point which our Lord has so largely proved in the whole tenor of this discourse."

And he further adds :—

"Be not content to keep the *whole law and offend in one point*. Hold thou fast all his commandments, and *all false ways do thou utterly abhor*. Do all the things whatsoever he hath commanded, and that with all thy might. Thou canst do all things through Christ strengthening thee ; though without him thou canst do nothing."

Mr. Fletcher, in his Checks, vol. i, pp. 100, 101, after having shown that the Levitical law was abolished, and that Jesus Christ saves us whenever we repent and believe, from the curse of the law, denounced upon actual transgressors, says :—

"And did our Lord side with Antinomians? Just the reverse. Far from repealing the two above-mentioned precepts, he asserts that on them hang all the law and the prophets ; and had the four Gospels been then written, he would, no doubt, have represented them as subservient to the establishing of the law, as he did the Book of Isaiah, the evangelical prophet. Such high thoughts had he of the law, that when a lawyer expressed his veneration for it by declaring that the love of God and our neighbour was more than all the whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices, Jesus, seeing that he had answered discreetly, said unto him, 'Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. The Gospel itself terminates in the fulfilling of the commandments.'"

Dr. Clarke, also, in his notes on Matt. v, 17-20, says:—

“ He completes this law, and the sayings of his prophets, *in his members*, by giving them grace to love the Lord with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, and their neighbour as themselves.”

And in respect to the righteousness of the Christian exceeding the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, he remarks:—

“ Unless it [your righteousness] take in not only the *letter*, but the *spirit* and *design* of the *moral* and *ritual* precept; the one directing you how to *walk* so as to please God, the other pointing out Christ the great atonement, through and by which a sinner is enabled to do so,—more than that of the Scribes and Pharisees, who only attended to the *letter* of the law, and had, indeed, made even that of no effect by their tradition, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

In his notes on Romans viii, 4, *That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us*, he says:—

“ That the guilt might be pardoned through the merit of that sacrifice; and that we might be enabled, by His own grace and Spirit, to walk in newness of life, loving God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbour as ourselves; and thus the righteousness, the *spirit*, *design*, and *purpose* of the law is fulfilled in us, through the strength of the Spirit of Christ, which is here put in opposition to the *weakness of the law through the flesh*.”

Mr. Watson, also, in his *Institutes*, vol. ii, p. 470, bears the following testimony to the obligations of the moral law, which he supports by a variety of facts and arguments :—

“ The summary of the law and the prophets, which is to love God with all our heart, and to serve him with all our strength, and to love our neighbour as ourselves, is unquestionably enjoined, and even re-enacted, by the Christian lawgiver.”

And on page 471 he has the following :—

“ We have the whole decalogue brought into the Christian code of morals by a distinct injunction of its separate precepts, and by their recognition as a permanent and unchangeable obligation. The fourth commandment, respecting the Sabbath only, being so far excepted, that its injunction is not so expressly marked. This, however, is no exception in fact ; for besides that its original place in the two tables sufficiently distinguishes it from all positive, ceremonial, and typical precepts, and gives it a moral character in respect of its *ends*—which are, first, mercy to servants and cattle, and, second, the *worship* of Almighty God, undisturbed by worldly interruptions and cares—it is necessarily included in that *law* which our Lord declares he came not to destroy or abrogate—in that *law* which St. Paul declares to be *established by faith*, and among those *commandments* which our Lord declares must be *kept*, if any one would *enter into life*.”

Dr. Peck says :—

“ The question has never been raised in the Church, except by rank Antinomians, whether men are bound to

keep the commandments of God, or, which is the same thing, to be governed by the moral law. Nor has the *practicability* of this duty ever been denied by any others, except, perhaps, the old school Calvinists. But the question at issue is, whether the fulfilling of the law, which is both obligatory and *attainable*, amounts to *perfect obedience*.”—*Christian Perfection*, page 261.

With this I heartily agree, and hence have not used the word “*perfect obedience*,” on account of the ignorance and infirmities of our nature, which inadvertently lead to those deviations from the perfect rule of right, which require the atoning merits and continual intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ to render our works acceptable.

The above comments, with the exception of the one on Romans viii, 4, and Dr. Peck’s, are founded on the following words of our Saviour’s Sermon on the Mount:—

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily, I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do, and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

This celebrated passage of Scripture must set the question at rest respecting the perpetually binding influence of the moral law, and therefore nothing more need be said on the subject.

O, my dear M., can we love God, the Author, and not love his law which he has given for the regulation of our conduct? Is not this law the face of God unveiled to man, the "brightest efflux," as Wesley says, "of his nature," the clear development of his purpose, and the most distinct expression of his will? And therefore what more substantial evidence can we give of our allegiance to the Sovereign, than a cheerful, loving obedience, according to the best of our knowledge and power, to his commandments? Hence says our poet:—

"Lo! I come with JOY to DO
The blessed Master's WILL—
Him in OUTWARD WORKS pursue,
And serve his pleasure still;
Faithful to my Lord's COMMANDS,
I still would choose the better part;
Serve with careful Martha's hands,
And loving Mary's HEART."

Unite the two, "loving Mary's heart," and "careful Martha's hands," or, in other words, unite a loving heart and a careful hand, unite inward and outward religion, so that we can say, "Careful without care I am," and we have the "perfect Christian."

May my dear M. adopt, with a full confiding heart, the next verse of that most admirable hymn, in which the poet so sweetly blends together a calm submission to the will of God, and a diligent discharge of every duty :—

“ Careful without care I am,
Nor feel my HAPPY TOIL ;
Kept in PEACE in Jesus’ name,
Supported by his SMILE ;
JOYFUL thus by FAITH to show,
I find his SERVICE my reward ;
Every WORK I do below,
I DO IT TO MY LORD.”

LETTER XXI.

How to attain sanctification—1. To feel its necessity : 2. To believe in its attainableness : 3. To apprehend its nature : 4. To understand its evidence : 5. To be determined to seek it—It is all of grace—Must be received by faith alone—An error stated—Why so much importance attached to faith—The Spirit of God goes before, and prepares the way—Charles Wesley’s poetry.

MY DEAR M—— : I humbly trust that I have succeeded in showing the *necessity*, the *propriety*, the *nature*, and the *evidences* of holiness, or entire sanctification. And now, the most important part of my work remains to be done ; and I most ardently pray, that my head, my heart, and my pen may be guided aright : that the one may be enlightened by the Holy Spirit ;

that the other may be warmed with Divine love, and that my pen may be directed by the "wisdom coming from above," that I may see the way clearly, and understand the mind of God on this subject; that my heart may willingly and lovingly follow after, and fully enter into it, and that my pen may lucidly, plainly, and fully mark out the way in which inquiring souls may seek and find the "pearl of great price;" so that no one, however weak or strong, may be led astray.

The first thing essential to its attainment, is to perceive and feel its *necessity*; for no one will ever seek for a thing of which he does not feel the need. This necessity I have pointed out in my first, second, and third letters.

The second thing requisite is to believe—unhesitatingly believe—in its possibility. This, I think, I have abundantly shown in my fourth, fifth, and sixth letters. I say the imperfect believer must fully believe in the possibility of attaining "perfect love," or he will never seek after it, with a view to its present attainment—for a man would be the veriest fool among fools to seek after a thing perfectly beyond his reach, or which he believed to be wholly unattainable.

The third thing is, as clearly as may be to apprehend its nature, otherwise his views will

be confused or erroneous, and perhaps altogether false, and therefore, though he may seek after it, he will do it confusedly or erroneously, and perhaps altogether falsely; and hence, as he is pursuing a phantom of his own imagination, he will never obtain the object of his pursuit. To prevent such a fatal catastrophe, I have endeavoured, according to the ability which God gave me, in my seventh and eighth letters, to describe its nature, or to show in what it consists.

The fourth prerequisite is to understand its evidence, which I have presented in the subsequent letters, to which my readers—for, my dear M., I presume to have some other readers besides yourself—are referred.

The last thing requisite is, to be determined to seek after it with full purpose of heart, and never to rest satisfied until it is found, and also to know the way in which it may be found; and this I shall now endeavour to point out as Scripturally and as plainly as possible.

In the first place, let it be deeply engraven upon the heart—as it was, and is, upon the heart of my dear friend, to whom I write—that every blessing with which the soul is blessed is of GRACE—*pure, unmerited, and unbounded* GRACE—manifested in Christ Jesus, and conveyed to the

soul by the direct or indirect operation of the Holy Spirit. Neither reading nor hearing the word of God, partaking of the holy sacraments, repentance, prayer, nor even believing, will be effectual to this or any other degree of salvation, only so far as it may be accompanied by the operation of the Holy Spirit on the heart—in the inmost soul, moulding it into the image of God.

In the next place, it must be conceded on all hands that it is to be received, if ever received at all, by a simple act of faith. This inevitably follows from the former proposition, namely, that it is *all of* GRACE; for the very idea of a thing's being of grace, is that it is a FREE GIFT; for this enters into the very composition of grace, the word essentially signifying a *free, unmerited* GIFT; and therefore it is not, and cannot be, bestowed as a reward for any work done by us, whether it be a work of piety towards God, or of mercy or benevolence towards man. None of these works, or all together, can make us any better, more worthy, or more fitted for the reception of any blessing from God, than what we now are; and the best of us, considered in our natural, unrenewed state, are but hell-deserving sinners; and considered in relation to God's holy law, which is as unbending in its demands

as the throne of God itself, should be only worthy of eternal damnation.

This being the case, if we are ever made the partakers of this "great salvation," we must receive it by faith only.

But let us carefully guard against some errors that may arise out of this doctrine of salvation by faith. It is so stated, not because there is any intrinsic excellence in faith, or the act of believing, simply considered, any more than in any other act of the mind ; but it is because the believing soul lays hold on God through Jesus Christ, who is "able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him." It is not, therefore, the simple act of believing that saves us, but the truth in which we believe. "If the TRUTH make you free, ye shall be free indeed." It is the truth, therefore—the TRUTH OF GOD—of that God that cannot lie—of Him who has said, "I will cleanse you from all your filthiness"—it is the truth of *this* God, who is faithful and WILL DO IT—that saves the trembling soul that comes to him by faith, saying,—

"Lord, I BELIEVE thy every word,
Thy every PROMISE TRUE ;
And lo ! I wait on thee, my Lord,
Till I my strength RENEW."

This will appear still more evident when it is

considered that the belief of an error is the same act of the mind as the belief of the truth. Believing is compared to eating. Here are two beggars, to whom is given a piece of bread. The one eats his bread and dies ; the other eats his and lives. Now the act of eating was precisely the same in both cases. They both took the bread, masticated it with their teeth, and swallowed it : but the effects were far different ; the one dies and the other lives. What caused this difference ? What ? The one piece of bread contained poisonous matter, and the other was wholesome. It was the quality of the bread, therefore, and not the act of eating, which produced these different effects. And in all cases, when we are nourished by our food, it is the food that nourishes us, and not the act of eating ; although the eating is so essential to our living that, let ever so much food, and that of the best quality, be furnished, unless we partake of it we cannot live.

Just so in respect to those who are seeking this “ pure and undefiled religion.” The one believes he has it when he has it not, and like the beggar who ate the poisoned bread, believing an error, he has no spiritual life ; and will, unless he is undeceived by the application of truth to his heart, ultimately die. The other lays hold

by faith on the promises of God, holds fast until God speaks in accents of love to his soul, "I will; be thou clean." "Come ye out from among them, and I will receive you;" and he "arises and shines, having the glory of God risen upon him;" and he now "lives by faith in the Son of God, who gave himself for him." Now, the simple act of believing, in these two cases, was precisely the same, but the effects were far different; and these were caused, not by the act of the mind in believing, but by the thing believed. The one believed an error and died. The other believed a truth and lived. It was, therefore, the thing believed that both saved and killed. Hence the vast importance of the proposition of our Saviour, before quoted, "If the TRUTH make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

But some will doubtless say, if this be so, why is so much importance attached to faith? Why is it so frequently said, in substance, "He that believeth shall be saved"—"Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"—"The just shall live by faith?" The reason is very obvious. Take the simile of eating the bread for an illustration. Let there be ever so much and so good food provided, unless we eat we cannot live.

And so also, though the provisions of the Gospel are simple,

“Enough for all, enough for each,
Enough forever more,”

and though they are freely offered to us, unless we receive them we cannot be profited by them; cannot be saved from our sins, and be made partakers of this “great salvation;” and there is no other way for us to receive them, but by simply believing “with the heart unto righteousness.”

But in all this process the Lord goes before and prepares the way, by the operation of his Holy Spirit upon the heart, pointing out the way for the penitent sinner—and this penitence itself is the effect of the Spirit working within him—to come to Jesus Christ by faith; and then working in the heart of the justified believer, convincing him of the necessity of entire sanctification, presenting to his mind the Lord Jesus, whose blood is now ready to “cleanse him from all unrighteousness,” and finally enabling him to throw himself, by a simple act of faith, upon the mercy of God in Christ Jesus for the full salvation of his soul from all sin, and when thus saved he sees and feels that it is all of grace, from beginning to its end.

Let us, my dear M., be deeply convinced of

the absolute necessity of this preparation of heart by the inworking of the Holy Spirit, which, as the apostle says, “works mightily in you that believe,” stirring up within us a desire after this very thing, creating a “hungering and thirsting after” this perfect “righteousness,” and in the mean time begetting a self-loathing, and a thorough consciousness of our utter inability to save ourselves by anything we can possibly do; and while in this state of mind, “burdened, sick, and faint,” throwing ourselves helpless at the feet of Jesus, we cry out in the expressive language of the poet, in that most admirable of all the admirable hymns Charles Wesley ever wrote, and which Dr. Watts said was worth all the poetry he had ever written:—

“What though my shrinking flesh complain,
And murmur to contend so LONG;
I rise superior to my pain:
When I am *weak*, then am I *strong*!
And when MY ALL of strength shall FAIL,
I SHALL WITH THE GOD-MAN PREVAIL.”

And O, with what earnestness does this “weak,” “self-despairing” one, struggling as under a mighty load of inward pollutions, staggering, “fainting” under his burden, and totally failing to find any relief in himself, or in anything but the Almighty Saviour whom he so

importunately seeks—I say with what vehement earnestness does he pray in the next verse:—

“Yield to me NOW, for I *am* WEAK,
But CONFIDENT IN SELF-DESPAIR ;
Speak to my heart, in blessings speak ;
Be conquer'd by my INSTANT PRAYER .
SPEAK, or thou never hence shalt move,
And tell me if thy name be love.”

I can hardly deny myself the pleasure of anticipating the happy deliverance of the soul which is brought into the glorious liberties of God's sanctified children, which I design, if God gives me strength for the task, to portray in a future letter, by quoting the next verse in this most exquisitely sweet and powerfully descriptive hymn, so delightfully expressive of the feelings of a soul receiving an answer to its “instant prayer.” Read it, my dear M., ay, sing it with a heart overflowing with loving gratitude to God for manifesting such love to our fallen world, and for raising up such a man as Charles Wesley, whose finest touches of poetry have cheered the hearts of thousands—as they do mine at this moment of writing—of weary, yet happy pilgrims from this to the land of rest. After that strong prayer of faith, the poet puts the following language into the mouth of his seeking, penitent believer, expressive of his joy at having found the object of his pursuit:—

“ ’Tis LOVE ! ’tis LOVE ! Thou diedst for me ;
 I know the whisper in my heart :
 The morning breaks, the shadows flee,
 One universal love thou art ;
 To me, to all, thy bowels move,
 Thy nature and thy name is LOVE.”

I leave you, my dear M., to find out the emphatical words, for they seem to me every one so full of meaning, that I know not how to distinguish one from the other, except it be the first two and the last.

With this I must bid you adieu for the present, with a promise, by God’s permission, to resume in my next, the subject of the way to attain the blessing about which I am writing.

LETTER XXII.

Mr. Fletcher and Hester Ann Rogers — Their interview related—
 Mr. Fletcher relates his experience—Loses the blessing four times by not confessing it—Confesses his folly—He now professes to be “dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God”—Through Jesus Christ—He then called on all to confess Christ—Exhorted them to come to Him—Many professed the blessing—The blessed effect upon Mrs. Rogers—The whole commended to the reader.

MY DEAR M——: You have doubtless read much of Mr. Fletcher, as well as of Hester Ann Rogers, both of whom were living and dying examples of “perfect love.” The former, you know, wrote largely in its defence, and were it

not that objections assume new aspects, nothing more need be said on the subject. My object has been, without stating these objections in a formal manner, to meet and obviate them.

I think, after all, the most irrefutable evidence of the truth and reality of this doctrine is to be found in the experience and life of those who have professed its enjoyment. And there is an interesting fragment of the experience of Mr. Fletcher, preserved in the "Extracts from the Journal of Mrs. Hester Ann Rogers," being the second part of her Journal, not published in this country, in which he narrates the manner of his coming into the possession of this great blessing ; and as I cannot doubt that it will be read by you, my dear M., and by all others who take an interest in this subject, I take the liberty of presenting it, as an illustration of the truth of what I have advanced. Mrs. Rogers introduces the account thus :—

"I was kept all the morning in solemn expectation of blessings in seeing and conversing with Mr. Fletcher ; till just before he arrived it was suggested, 'Thou wilt be disappointed ; thou art expecting from man, and not from God.' For a moment my faith seemed staggered : but I fell on my knees before the Lord, owning him as the only source of all my hopes and happiness ; and he so abundantly filled me with his love, that nature was

almost overpowered ; and I felt as if I must have expired at his feet, had not tears relieved me."

She then proceeds to relate the interview she had with Mr. Fletcher, in the following words :—

"During these happy moments of communion with my God, Mr. Fletcher, Miss Bosanquet, and Mrs. Crosby arrived. When I entered the room where they were assembled, the heavenly man was giving out the following verses, with such animation as I have seldom witnessed :—

"Near us, assisting Jesus, stand ;
Give us the opening heavens to see ;
Thee to behold at God's right hand,
And yield our parting souls to Thee.

"My Father, O my Father, hear,
And send the fiery chariot down !
Let Israel's flaming steeds appear,
And whirl us to the starry crown !

"We, we would die for Jesus too,
Through tortures, fires, and seas of blood ;
And all triumphantly break through,
And plunge into the depths of God !"

After this, he poured out his full soul to God in prayer. Indeed, his every breath seemed to be a continuance of prayer or praise, or spiritual instruction ; and every word that fell from his lips appeared to be accompanied by unction from above.

"After dinner, he inquired respecting Miss L., saying he had seen my letters to her. I took out her last to me, which he desired me to read ; and kindly explained several things he had written to her, which she did not clearly comprehend ; particularly that (in his words) 'all who enjoy perfect love possess also the gift of pro-

phesy.' By this, he said, he did not mean the miraculous gift of foretelling future events ; but the magnifying God, by speaking unto men with the new heart of love, and the new tongue of praise ; as on the day of Pentecost, those who were filled with the Holy Ghost glorified God by speaking of his wonderful works, as the Spirit gave them utterance. This utterance he called the gift of prophecy ; and earnestly insisted, that we might all prove the same baptismal fire of love that descended on that day on the primeval Church, seeing the promise was unto them and to their children, and to all them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. That we, as they, if we assert our privilege, may, with great power, bear witness of the grace of our Lord Jesus, and spread the flame of love we feel, by speaking unto edification, and exhortation, and comfort, among all our acquaintance. One hundred and twenty such souls he believed would set the world on fire.

" But he observed, the reason why those perfected in love did not more fully spread the savour of grace was, because they do not, in general, plead for a more abundant outpouring of the Holy Spirit, both in his gifts and graces. He then earnestly exhorted all present to seek this fulness of love, and this gift of utterance ; and taking my hand, proceeded, ' Will *you*, my sister, be *one* who shall spread the sacred flame ? Come, my friend, I will covenant with you ; we will join to magnify the Lord, and bear *our* testimony before men and angels. Will you ?'

" In deep humility, but filled with the presence and power of God, I answered, with flowing tears, ' In the strength of Jesus, *I will.*'

" ' Glory be to God ! glory be to God !' said he, many times over ; and his holy soul was filled with praise.

Lord, strengthen thy feeble dust to keep this covenant even unto death !

“ I had a solemn season of communion with God before the meeting in Mr. Smith’s parlour. When we came there, after singing and prayer, Mr. Fletcher stood up, and said,—

“ ‘ My dear brethren and sisters, God is here ! I feel him in this place. But I am ashamed ; I would hide my face in the dust. I have dishonoured my God, and denied my Saviour by not confessing him. I have grieved his Spirit. I have been ashamed and afraid to declare what he hath done for my soul ; but I am sensible of my folly, and deeply humbled on account thereof, and he has restored my soul.

“ ‘ Last Wednesday evening, He instructed and commanded me, by his word, Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ. I obeyed the voice of God, and now obey it, by declaring, to the praise of his love, I am freed from sin. Yea, I now bear witness, to the glory of his grace, I am dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ, who is my Lord, and reigns over every motion in my soul.

“ ‘ I have received this blessing four or five times before ; but I grieved the Spirit of God by not making confession, and as often I let it go. I lost it by not observing and obeying the order of God, who hath told us, With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation ; which latter I neglected.

“ ‘ Once the tempter suggested, What you feel cannot be the blessing ; perfection is something higher. You are not delivered from mistakes, ignorances, real errors in judgment, in memory, &c. ; therefore, though you are

delivered from sinful tempers, you ought not to make a profession that you are holy. I listened to these things, and soon discovered I had lost what God had bestowed.

“ ‘When I had re-obtained the same glorious deliverance, the bait was offered under another form. The enemy now said, Wait a few days, or weeks, and see if the fruits of sanctification appear, before you profess so great a salvation. I had no sooner yielded to await for the fruits, but I began to doubt of the witness, which before I had felt in my heart ; and was in a little time sensible I had lost both.

“ ‘A third time, with shame I confess it, I was kept from being a witness for my Lord, by the suggestion, Thou art a public character, a city set upon a hill ; the world and professors have all an eye upon thee ; and if some future trial should overcome thee, or if, as before, thou shouldest by any means lose the blessing, what a dishonour and reproach will it be to the doctrine of heart-holiness ?

“ ‘A fourth time, Satan prevailed over a worm by, It is true, thou art now freed from sin,—thou knowest that Gospel-perfection is perfect love ; that love is the fulfilling of the law, not of Adam, but of Gospel grace ; and that many ignorances, mistakes, &c., are consistent with perfect love ; but how many thousands will not believe this ! How many affirm that every transgression of the Adamic law,—the law of perfect innocence suited to Adam’s sinless nature, his perfect body and soul,—every transgression of this law, is sin ! and therefore, if thou profess thyself freed from sin, all these will give thy profession the lie. Enjoy, therefore, what God hath wrought in thy soul, and hold it fast, without declaring publicly, I am freed from sin ; I am holy ; I am perfect

in love. But again I found, He that hideth his Lord's talent, and improveth it not, from that unprofitable servant shall be taken away even that he hath.

“ ‘Now, my brethren, you see my folly :—I have confessed in your presence, and now I resolve in your presence also, henceforth I will confess my Master to all the world. And I declare unto you, in the presence of God the Holy Trinity, I am now dead indeed unto sin. I do not say, I am crucified with Christ, because some of our well-meaning brethren say by this can only be meant a gradual dying unto sin, for a man who is crucified is a long time in dying; but I profess unto you I am *dead* unto sin, and that as effectually as my original nature was free from righteousness. But then, if our good brethren the Calvinists will still insist, ‘Every ignorance, every involuntary mistake, is sin,’ we will not quarrel; then, in this sense I am not freed from sin, for I am not freed from these things. But, if I may venture to believe my Lord Jesus, if *love be the fulfilling of the law*, then I know that these things are consistent with love, with a single eye, and a pure heart; and I therefore dare to reckon thus in the presence of you all; and I mean to declare myself henceforth, before men and angels, dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ.

“ ‘Mind, it is still *through* Jesus, and *in* Jesus, not independent of him, or separate from him. I have taken him to be my Prophet, Priest, and King; my indwelling Holiness; my All in all. He is all I want; and I wait for the more full and entire fulfilment of that prayer of Christ, Let them be one in us; even that pentecostal blessing, that baptism of the Spirit poured out on the whole Church now upon earth, that shall make us all of *one heart* and *one mind*. O for the pure primeval

flame ! O for the fulness of the dispensation of the Holy Ghost ! O my brethren and sisters, pray, pray, pray, for this effusion of the Spirit ! *Wrestle, agonize* with God till it be given.

“ Then he called upon all present to confess the Lord Jesus. And if any, said he, have not the gift of utterance, pray for it, and it shall be given. You are commanded to covet earnestly and to pray for gifts, not for your own sake, but for that of the Church. A man without gifts is like the king in disguise ; he appears as a subject only. You are *kings* and *priests* unto God : Put on your robes, and wear on your garter, conspicuous to all, HOLINESS TO THE LORD ! Reckon yourselves *now* dead indeed unto sin.

“ You who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, what wait you for ? Delay not. Unite yourselves to Jesus, your Holiness, by believing ; take to yourselves this great salvation ; take it *now*. You *must* receive it *by faith* : Faith lays hold, and says, It is mine. As when you reckon with your creditor, with your host, and when you have paid all, reckon yourself free ; so now reckon with *God*. Jesus hath paid all for thee ;—purchased not only thy pardon, but thine inward holiness. Now it is God’s command, *Reckon* thyself dead indeed unto sin ; freed from sin, and alive unto God, *now*, this moment. O *reckon now* ! Fear not ; believe, believe, believe ! and continue to believe every moment ; for it is retained, as it is received, *by faith alone*. Whosoever thou art that wilt perseveringly believe, it will be as a fire in thy bosom, and constrain thee to confess with thy mouth, thy Lord and King JESUS ! and in spreading the sacred flame of love thou wilt be saved to the very uttermost.

“ My dear brethren, make a noble confession this

night. Hide nothing from us of all that the Lord hath done for you. Yea, strengthen my hands, and let us offer the sacrifice of praise.'

"After Mr. Fletcher ceased to speak, about thirty witnessed for Jesus, that they, through grace, were dead unto sin, and alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Numbers were so affected that they could not speak. I felt what was truly unutterable; I sunk into nothing; I was lost in the fulness of the Triune God!

"When the meeting was concluded, Mr. F., taking hold of my hand, said, 'Glory be to God, my dear sister, for the testimony you have borne this night!' and still holding my hand between his, he repeated several times, 'Glory be to God!' I was so afresh filled with a weight of love, that I was constrained to retire, and vent my full soul in tears before the Lord."

I commend this truly interesting matter most heartily to you, my dear M., and to all who may condescend to read these letters, and to those more especially who either profess or are seeking after this invaluable blessing, and particularly that part of it in which Mr. Fletcher urges the necessity of declaring "what God had done for his soul." I fear many stumble here, not considering that God has pledged himself to keep those in "perfect peace" who cleave unto him "with full purpose of heart."

LETTER XXIII.

It must be looked for now—Without a moment's delay—It is the gift of God—All of grace—The way to attain it now illustrated—This doctrine from Wesley—From Fletcher—Mrs. Palmer—Dr. Peck—From Charles Wesley's poetry.

MY DEAR M—— : In my last I endeavoured to point out the way in which the penitent believer must come into the possession of this blessing of “perfect love,” or holiness of heart. If what I have advanced be true, as I am fully persuaded it is, then it follows, of necessity, that it may be received now—this very moment—without a moment's delay. For if it is all of grace, received by a single act of believing, then we must receive it, if we ever receive it at all, now, in the present tense, without any other preparation than what God has already wrought in the heart by the operation of His Spirit, convincing us of its necessity, opening to our minds the way to attain it, demonstrating that “all things are now ready,”—that God is now able and willing to save us from all our sins this very moment—and the moment we unhesitatingly believe, then we *are saved*,—not indeed because we believe it, but we believe it because

it is a fact,* that we “are saved by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves ; it is the gift of God.”

The salvation which is the gift of God has come,—it is even now at the door of our hearts,—and all we have to do to receive and enjoy it, is to open the door, by removing the bar of unbelief with the key of faith, and let the Saviour, who stands at the door, with “all his great salvation,” into our inmost souls—and when this is done we are saved, so that we may “reckon ourselves dead unto sin, and alive unto God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Here is the key-stone of the arch which binds the whole spiritual building together—THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. As I before said, it is not the simple act of believing that saves us, but it is the truth believed—it is the object on

* There are two facts to be believed in order to be sanctified :—The first is, that God is now ready and willing to sanctify us just as we are ; and we must hold on to this truth until He does it ; and, secondly, when He does it, we shall believe it, because it is done, and we have a witness of the fact. Hence the assertion in the text, that “we are saved, not because we believe it, but we believe it because it is a fact”—a fact already revealed to the heart by the Holy Spirit, and therefore we believe it as an established fact, supported by competent testimony. And any man who believes himself sanctified before he has this evidence of the fact, believes an error, though he was fully authorized to believe, the moment he set himself to seek it with all his heart, that God was then ready and willing to save him from all his sins and sanctify him wholly.

which the soul reposes that brings salvation—it is the believing in the LORD JESUS CHRIST—this is the truth that saves us, because there is an efficacy in the name of Jesus Christ, not found in any other name in the whole range of intelligences. It is therefore through this grand connecting medium between heaven and earth, between God and man, that this great salvation is brought to the soul of him who hangs upon Him by a single act of believing, and then, on this sole condition, HE saves us by an amazing act of GRACE.

It is like this: A man is standing on a dangerous precipice. He cannot go back for fear of falling into the hands of his enemies, who have driven him to this place. He cannot leap the chasm because it is so wide. He dare not descend for fear of falling into the yawning gulf. In this dilemma he hears a voice calling to him from the bottom of the gulf, “Let yourself fall, and I will catch you, and land you safely on the other side. To convince you of the truth of what I say, here are A, B, and C, and some dozen others, all of whom were once in the same predicament in which you find yourself, and they all threw themselves into my arms, and they are now safely landed on the other side of the gulf. Let them speak, and

testify for me." They all, with one consent, confirm the truth of what that strange voice had asserted. The poor, trembling man is thus induced to throw himself into the hands of his friend, and the next moment he finds himself safe over the gulf, joining the others in a song of praise to the benevolence, fidelity, and strength of their friend.

Just so the trembling, penitent believer finds himself standing upon the verge of despair. He has been seeking after deliverance from inbred sin for days and months. During all this time he has been striving to fit himself more perfectly for the blessing by prayer and fasting, mortifying the flesh, and other good works, but he could not grasp the prize of perfect love. Here he stands, half believing, half doubting, trembling as upon a precipice, afraid to go back and not daring to venture forward, when the voice of Jesus Christ, his Almighty Friend, salutes his ears, saying, "All things are possible to him that believes. Throw yourself, by a simple act of faith, into my arms, and I will hold you fast. Here are my friends, and your friends, all of whom will testify that they were once in a similar predicament to yourself, but they cast their souls into my hands, and I supported them." To the truth of this they all

testify. Finally the seeking soul cries out, "Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief!" Help instantly comes. His inward distress is now removed, his soul is now filled "with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

He now wonders why he did not sooner believe, and enter into rest, not duly considering that all this time God has been preparing his heart for the reception of this very blessing, in this very way, and that therefore he has finally received it at the time and manner which God had himself prescribed, with the exception of his hesitancy in taking God at his word; for this unbelief he is now ashamed, because he knows that it was dishonouring to God to discredit his word, inasmuch as all "his promises are yea and amen, to the glory of God the Father."

In respect to the duty of all those who have solemnly consecrated themselves to God, to believe that he is *now*, this *very moment*, able and willing to save them from all their sins, without a minute's delay, all our writers on this subject agree. Thus Wesley, vol. vi, p. 505, says:—

"Nay, but ask that it may be done *now*; to-day, while it is called to-day. Do not call this setting God a time. Certainly, to-day is his time as well as to-morrow. Make haste, man, make haste! Let—

“Thy soul break out in strong desire,
 The perfect bliss to prove ;
 Thy longing heart be all on fire
 To be dissolved in love.” ✕

Mr. Fletcher, also, in vol. ii, p. 639, says :—

“Hence it follows that the most evangelical method of following after the perfection to which we are immediately called, is that of seeking it *now*, by endeavouring *fully* to lay hold on the promise of that perfection through *faith*, just as if our repeated acts of obedience could never help us forward.”

Mrs. Palmer says :—

“Yes, THERE IS A SHORTER WAY! O! I am sure this long waiting and struggling with the powers of darkness is not necessary.” “How many, whom infinite love would long since have brought into this state, instead of seeking to be brought into the possession at once, are seeking a preparation for the reception of it!” “God requires present holiness.”—*Way of Holiness*, pp. 17, 18, 19.

Dr. Peck says, *Christian Perfection*, p. 407 :—

“We must believe that this blessing is for us *now*. The faith that the blessing may be had some time or another—at some future indefinite period—will not prevail. It must contemplate the provision as within our reach—as *now* at hand. It will not admit of delay. It knows no inconvenient season. It says, Surely now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.”

In this, then, we are all agreed, that everything is fully prepared by the wisdom and goodness of God; the “fatlings are killed,” “the

table is spread," and all things are now ready for the reception of the blessing of entire sanctification ; so that whenever the penitent believer is prepared, by being willing to part with all his sins, to surrender his whole heart to God, he may receive the promised cleansing by a simple act of faith in Jesus Christ.

This, I believe, is in conformity to the experience of every sanctified soul. Do you not remember, my dear M., when you cried out, in the language of the poet—

" Into thy gracious HANDS I FALL,
And with the arms of FAITH EMBRACE ;
O King of Glory, hear my call !
O raise me, heal me by THY GRACE !
Now righteous through thy GRACE I am ;
No condemnation now I dread ;
I TASTE SALVATION in thy name ;
ALIVE in thee, my living Head."

And in respect to the earnestness with which the soul, in this state, is taught to look for a present blessing, fully believing that God is now, this very moment, able and willing to save to the uttermost, is fully expressed in a number of our hymns. Take the following as a sample:—

" Rock of Israel ' cleft for me,
For us, for all mankind,
See, thy feeblest followers, see,
Who call thy death to mind :
Still the fountain of thy blood
STANDS FOR SINNERS OPEN'D WIDE ;
Now, e'en NOW, my Lord, my God,
I WASH ME IN THY SIDE."

Now e'en now, we all plunge in,
 And DRINK the purple wave ;
 This the antidote for sin,
 'Tis this our souls shall save :
 With the LIFE OF JESUS fed,
 Lo ! from strength to strength we rise,
 Follow'd by our Rock, and led
 To meet Thee in the skies."

Equally expressive are the following words of the same inimitable poet, whose words of fire, I am sure, I cannot too often quote, especially for you, and for all those Methodists who admire the poetical genius of Charles Wesley. He says, in the 326th hymn,—

" Now, e'en NOW, I yield, I yield,
 With ALL MY SINS to part ;
 Jesus, *speak my pardon seal'd*,
 And PURIFY my heart ;
 Purge the LOVE OF SIN AWAY,
 Then I into NOTHING FALL ;
 Then I see the perfect day,
 And CHRIST IS ALL IN ALL."

And to show you, my dear M., how fully the poet has taught us to rely most implicitly on the grace of God in Christ Jesus, for this great salvation, I will quote one more verse from the 308th hymn. It reads as follows :—

" Jesus, thou art our King !
 To me thy succour bring—
 Christ the mighty one art thou,
 Help for all on thee is laid :
 This the word ; I *claim it now* ;
 Send me now the *promised aid*."

May God help you, my dear M., who have obtained this invaluable blessing, to hold it fast by faith, and to prove the genuineness of your faith by good works, and especially the work of inviting all your Christian associates to seek for the high prize of "perfect love."

That this good work is advancing in the Church, I greatly rejoice to believe, and my sole object in writing these letters, is to contribute my mite towards its deepening and widening in the hearts of all God's professing people, as well as to communicate strength and comfort to the heart of my friend.

LETTER XXIV.

An objection stated—Answered—He grows faster, in consequence of being sanctified—Illustrated—No other way to avoid apostasy than to press forward—No standing still—No foundation for the objection—The sanctified soul will grow to all eternity—Confirmed by our Hymns.

MY DEAR M——: It has been objected by some, that if we are made partakers of entire sanctification, we are so perfect that we cannot grow any more. That this objection is founded in error, will appear manifest from the following considerations.

Which child is likely to grow the faster—the

one that is born in a healthy state, has suitable care taken of him, is nourished with wholesome food, and takes a proper degree of exercise—or the one that has a sickly constitution, has, consequently, no appetite for substantial food, and is unable to strengthen his physical system by due exercise? Common sense will answer, that the former must necessarily grow with the greatest thriftiness.

Well, the sanctified Christian is restored to perfect soundness of heart and mind, has a sharp appetite for spiritual food, and is ever ready to exercise himself in every good word and work. Such a soul is, therefore, prepared to "grow up into Christ, his living Head, in all things," much faster than the one yet labouring under the "dire disease" of "inbred sin." All his mental powers are in vigorous action—his understanding is enlightened—his affections are purified—his heart is expanded with holy love to God and man—his motives are pure, and he aims at right objects in all his pursuits—he has a keen relish for the word of God—believes heartily all the promises of God, and obeys his commandments. Does not such a man "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ?" Is he not prepared, from the state of his heart, as well as from the equilibrium intro-

duced into all his mental faculties, and into all the passions and appetites of his nature, to "grow up to the perfect stature of a man in Christ Jesus," much more steadily, thriftily, and, of course, more surely, than the one who is still lingering along under the weakening disease of the remains of sin in his heart? I think there can be but one opinion upon this subject.

We know very well that mankind are represented, in their natural state, as sickly, diseased, "bruised and mangled by the fall;" so much so, that "from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot there is no soundness." In this state the great Physician finds them. He takes them under his care, and to those who are willing to submit to his prescriptions, he pledges himself to effect a "perfect cure." This is done in justification and sanctification, the patient, in the mean time, submitting to take the bitter pill of repentance, while he exercises himself in prayer and faith. But a person who stops at justification has but half a cure performed. He is still sick at heart, and while labouring under this heart-sickness he certainly cannot grow up into Christ in all things as fast as he could were this remaining disease removed.

Besides, there is no other way to avoid back-sliding from God, than to strive after this entire

sanctification. Hence the reason why so "many are sickly and weakly" among us, and others are "falling asleep" in the arms of carnal security, is, because they have not been urged on in the path of holiness—because they have not "forgotten the things which are behind, and pressed towards the mark for the prize of their high calling of God in Christ Jesus"—because they did not "leave the principles of the doctrine of Christ, and go on to perfection."

And I scruple not to lay it down as an invariable rule, that unless a justified Christian continually press on in the way of holiness, and seek earnestly after entire sanctification, he will inevitably "lose his first love," slide back into a state of lukewarmness, and finally apostatize from God. No man can stand justified before God while he goes counter to his will. And this is the "will of God, even our sanctification," declared not only in the text just now quoted, but generally throughout the word of God, both in the Old and the New Testament. Well, can a man retain his justification that does not make this will the supreme rule of his faith and practice? Certainly he cannot. If, then, he would retain a consciousness of his "acceptance in the Beloved," he must "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doeth so easily beset him, and run

with patience the race that is set before him, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of his faith," that he may receive from him continual supplies of grace to strengthen him for the race, and wisdom to direct him in the selection of the means necessary for his growth in the Divine life.

It is so true, that it has become an established maxim, that there is "no standing still" in this "work of faith and labour of love." We must be either gaining or losing ; either going forward or backward. Those, therefore, who do not go forward, must go backward ; and those that thus go backward will most assuredly lose their standing in a state of justification, and, of course, fall into a state of condemnation—while those who go forward, according to their best light and ability, will gradually gain a victory over their besetting sins, will be delivered in the hour of temptation, until finally they will be able to say, sin is totally destroyed from their hearts, and the "life they now live, they live by faith in the Son of God"—"There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made them free from the law of sin and death."

There is, therefore, no foundation for this very common objection, that if a man is made "perfect in love," there is no room for growth. There are, in fact, degrees of perfection. As Mr. Fletcher has somewhere said, a bud is a perfect bud, but not a perfect flower, and a perfect flower is not perfect fruit, and the fruit may not be yet perfectly ripe. Each stage is perfect in its kind and degree, though the bud is very imperfect when compared to the ripened fruit. So the bud of conviction may be perfect in its kind, while the blossom of justification presents another degree of perfection, and the full-shaped fruit of sanctification presents a higher degree of perfection than either of the former, and then the sanctified Christian must go on ripening in every holy grace of the Spirit, until, like a ripe shock of corn, he is gathered into the garner of his Lord. And even after his arrival there, I apprehend he will be ever growing, his capacities will be continually expanding, so that he can comprehend new beauties of God and his works; new mysteries will be unfolded to his delighted view, while his holy soul shall forever drink of those rivers of pleasures which flow from His right hand forever more.

But the sanctified Christian will not only thus grow in wisdom, in humility, in faith, and abound

more and more in good works, but he will labour more cheerfully, more easily, vigorously, safely, and profitably. As a sound, healthy man can eat and work much more than he that is sickly, so the Christian that is made "every whit whole," by the healing efficacy of Jesus' blood, can do his Master's work to much better purpose than he that is still labouring under the sin-sick disease of the remains of the carnal mind. He can pray with a stronger faith, watch against the slightest touches of temptations to sin with greater vigilance and success, can speak to others on the subject of salvation with much more ease and propriety, and enter into all the works of benevolence with a deeper sense of their importance, than he otherwise could.

How full of this subject, this continued growth in the Divine life, are our Hymns, to which I so frequently refer with the more pleasure, not only because you, my dear M., admire them so much, and sing them so heartily and delightfully, but because they are so exactly conformable to Scripture, and agree so perfectly with the experience of every holy Christian.

"Yet ONWARD I haste to the heavenly feast ;

That, THAT is the FULNESS ; but THIS is the TASTE !"

But turn to the 283d hymn, old collection, and see how earnestly the poet prays God to

“let his wisdom be his guide,” and God’s “peace and love his portion be,” and then concludes the hymn in the following words of faith and prayer :—

“Arm me with thy whole armour, Lord !
 Support my WEAKNESS with THY MIGHT ;
 Gird on MY THIGH THY CONQ’RING SWORD,
 And shield me in the threat’ning fight :
 From FAITH to FAITH, from GRACE to GRACE,
 So in thy strength shall I GO ON ;
 Till heaven and earth flee from thy face,
 And glory END what grace BEGUN.”

And as if eager to grasp the whole length and breadth of sanctifying love, he says,—

“Give me the ENLARG’D desire,
 And OPEN, Lord, my soul,
 Thy own fulness to require,
 And comprehend the whole.
 STRETCH my faith’s capacity
 WIDER and yet WIDER still ;
 Then with all that is in thee,
 My soul FOREVER FILL !”

It would seem that the poet adopted the principle of perpetual progression, a continual enlargement of the mental capacity, not only while we live in this world, but to all eternity. And what is there incongruous in this ? Are not the works of the Almighty sufficiently magnificent to occupy the mightiest intellect in their contemplation, in their minutest examinations, as well as to command the wondering admiration of the most profound thinker, to all eternity ?

O, my dear M., this is a subject too vast to dwell upon. It overwhelms us by its greatness!

“Astonish'd at thy frowning brow,
Earth, hell, and heaven's strong pillars bow;
Terrible majesty is thine!
Who then can that vast love express,
Which bows thee down to me, who less
Than nothing am, till thou art mine!”

LETTER XXV.

How the blessing is kept—Walk in Christ—Live in Him by faith—God's work to sanctify and keep us—Poetry and Scripture quoted in proof—None can withstand God—Proved from Scripture and our Hymns—St. Paul's triumphant declaration—It is enough—The security of the sanctified asserted.

MY DEAR M——: Many, I suppose, have been deterred from seeking the entire sanctification of their natures from a fear that, though they might obtain it, they should not be able to keep it. This fear arises, I apprehend, from erroneous views respecting not only the nature of the blessing itself, but also of the manner in which it is to be kept.

It is true we have a duty to perform. “As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.” Call to remembrance the manner in which you received Christ Jesus as your almighty, your *present* Saviour. Was it not by faith? But this faith was not exercised in him,

until you were led to renounce all dependence upon yourself, as well as on every other creature, thing, or work. It was exercised also in the midst of prayer, accompanied by deep repentance, a renunciation of all sin, a sacrifice of self-love, earnest watchings against the intrusion of errors and sinful indulgence, and an intense desire after the "one thing needful." But notwithstanding all these exercises, none of them, nor all of them together, could have procured the blessing, unless God had bestowed it upon you by his Holy Spirit, applying directly to the heart the merits of the Lord Jesus, by which all sin was washed away.

The work of sanctification is therefore eminently the work of God. He effects it in the heart by the mighty energies of his Holy Spirit. Not all our mourning, self-loathing, sincere repentance, fasting, praying, and even believing, would bring the blessing to our souls, until God himself "work within us to will and to do of his own good pleasure."

"None is like Jeshurun's God,
So great, so strong, so high !
Lo ! he spreads his wings abroad,
He rides upon the sky !
Israel is his first-born son :
God, the Almighty God, is THINE ;
See him to THY HELP COME DOWN,
The excellence divine !"

Read this hymn through, my dear M., not carelessly, nor hurriedly, but attentively, marking every word, and note particularly the 2d and 6th verses, and see how emphatically our evangelical poet ascribed our salvation from sin to that God who spreads around the head of those who come to him for help,

“The everlasting arms.”

Well, now, as we are indebted to God's free, unbounded, unmerited grace in Christ Jesus for the reception of this great salvation, so we must remain indebted to the same almighty hand for its continuance.

“But is it possible that I
Should live, and SIN NO MORE?”

Hear the answer the poet gives to his own question:—

“Lord, if on thee I dare rely,
The FAITH shall bring the POWER.”

This is in perfect accordance with the declaration of the Apostle Peter:—“Ye are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.” Observe! “Ye are kept.” But how kept? “By the POWER OF GOD!” Not by your faith, simply considered, but only by faith, as a medium through which this continuous salvation is kept in the soul by the power of God. And I would ask, with all humility, and yet with strong faith

in the veracity and ability of God, whether He be not fully adequate to keep and preserve from all their enemies, however numerous, subtle, or strong, the souls that have “fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope that is set before them?” Hence he sings most delightfully, and with a strong, triumphant faith,—

“Thee the great Jehovah deigns
To succour and defend ;
Thee the eternal God sustains,
Thy Maker and thy Friend :
Israel, what hast thou to fear ?
Safe from all impending harms,
Round thee and beneath are spread
The everlasting arms.”

I have not marked any particular words in the above stanza, to distinguish them from the rest as being more emphatical, because every noun and verb appear to be full of meaning—expressive of the surest sustenance, support, and comfort—to a believing, sanctified soul, so that he may confidently say,—

“The world, sin, death, oppose in vain ;
Thou, by thy dying, death hast slain,
My great Deliverer and my God !
In vain does the old dragon rage,
In vain all hell its powers engage ;
None can withstand thy conquering blood.”

If none of the powers of hell, not even the “old Dragon” himself, can “withstand the conquering blood” of the Son of God, which is

continually applied to the heart of the believer, not only to cleanse but to *keep* him clean, what has this believing soul—however feeble, ignorant, or even helpless in himself—what, I say, has he to fear? If he only fears and loves God, puts his trust in him, obeys his commandments with a filial heart, he may bid defiance to all his enemies, and adopt the following language of the same inimitable poet, whose celestial strains have animated the hearts of many a weary pilgrim in his way to the land of rest :—

“ By faith I plunge me in this sea ;
Here is my hope, my joy, my rest ;
Hither, when hell assails, I flee :
I look into my Saviour’s breast :
Away, sad doubt, and anxious fear !
Mercy is all that’s written there.”

O that our souls may fully enter into the spirit of these words, and catch a spark of the heavenly flame which burned upon the altar of his heart, and exercise a portion of that strong, triumphant faith, which bound him fast to the throne of God, and made him hang upon the promises, when he so confidently sung, and taught others to sing,—

“ Fix’d on this ground will I remain,
Though my heart fail, and flesh decay ;
This anchor shall my soul sustain,
When earth’s foundations melt away ;
Mercy’s full power I then shall prove,
Loved with an everlasting love ”

O! my dear M., does not your soul feel a new impulse of holy joy while reading the above lines? and do you not find, descending into the very depths of your heart, that settled peace of God which passeth all human understanding, while you, in imitation of the poet, fix your firm, unwavering faith on that promise, made to every believing soul which proves the genuineness of its faith by its fidelity in every good word and work, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee?" If this be the feeling of your heart, you do but sympathize with your unworthy friend and brother, whose heart expands, while writing, with an enlarged desire to make known, as far as in him lies, the riches of Divine grace, with which God has furnished the persevering believer, to buoy him up amidst the turbulent waves of the sea of life, and to give him those transporting anticipations of entering upon that tranquil ocean of eternal repose,

"Where all the ship's company meet."

How numerous, how rich, how full are the promises of God to this effect! Among others which might be selected, take the following from the lips of Christ himself:—"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man

pluck them out of my hand." John x, 27, 28. This promise is as full and as absolute as words can possibly make it. If, therefore, the sheep of Christ only listen to his voice, follow him in faith and love, refusing to hearken to "the voice of a stranger," they are safe as the power, goodness, and veracity of God can make them—for they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of his hand: and, with a view to render sure doubly sure, Jesus Christ adds, "And my Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man shall pluck them out of my Father's hands."

Though it is allowed that a sanctified believer may apostatize from God, yet, so long as he perseveres with fidelity, he is perfectly safe, because God has pledged himself to keep him under the hollow of his hand; and hence the apostle asks, "Who shall harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" There is no reason, therefore, to fear, provided only we are faithful in the performance of our duty, but that God will perfect the work, will "carry it on until the day of Jesus Christ;" and no man, no power in earth or hell, shall ever be able to "pluck us out of his Father's hand."

It was this view of the subject which enabled St. Paul to adopt that triumphant language in

Rom. viii, 35-39, in which he asks, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus."

On what is this persuasion founded? It is founded, 1. On the certainty of his own, and the experience of those of whom he wrote, of the sanctifying grace of God, respecting whom he had said, in verses 1-4, that "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus had made them free from the law of sin and death," and who "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." So long as they continue thus to walk straight-forward in the path of obedience to the commands of God, living by faith in Jesus Christ, they are perfectly safe, being "kept by the power of God." It is founded, 2. On the blood, and righteousness, and continued intercession of the Lord Jesus.

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is

even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

It is enough ! If the death of Christ was suffered for us—if his resurrection and continual intercession are in our behalf—if his strength is imparted to us—if the Holy Spirit has descended upon us to justify, regenerate, and sanctify our natures—if this same Holy Spirit is continually with us, to guide and comfort us, and help our infirmities—then, so long as we yield ourselves to his teachings, and consent to follow the Lamb wheresoever he may lead us, then may we confidently persuade ourselves that nothing "shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus."

Here, then, is the security of the sanctified Christian. So long as he is faithful, he is under the protection of the everlasting arms, and therefore may rest securely amidst storms and tempests, amidst temptations and trials, equally as calmly and confidently as in the most serene days of prosperity and happiness. In the midst of all these things he can say,—

"Yea, let men rage, since thou wilt spread
Thy shadowing wings around my head ;
Since in all pain thy tender love
Will still my sure refreshment prove."

LETTER XXVI.

Duty of the sanctified—To confess it—Proved from the Psalmist—From St. Paul—When a man speaks of what he knows, his words carry conviction—An appeal to M.—Example of the leper—This confession commits us—Mr. Wesley's practice quoted—Concluding remarks—Poetry quoted in favour of the doctrine.

MY DEAR M——: I cannot, consistently with my sense of duty, conclude these letters without endeavouring to point out the duty of those who have come into the possession of sanctification.

In the first place, it is the unquestionable duty of all such, on all suitable occasions, to proclaim it; for though it may be good to “hide the secrets of a king, it is right to proclaim the loving-kindness of God.” While it is said that “with the heart man believeth unto righteousness,” it is added, “with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” It is therefore as much our duty to make a “confession with the mouth” of what God has done for us, as it is to “believe with the heart” in Jesus Christ “unto righteousness.”

Read over the Scriptures, and advert particularly to those parts where the saints of God are represented as “declaring what God had done for their souls.” The Psalms especially are full

of these declarations. "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee." *Psa. li, 12, 13.* And then in the sixty-sixth Psalm, sixteenth verse, he says: "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." And this declaration of what God had done for his soul was the most effectual way of teaching transgressors the ways of God, because by so doing his ways of saving sinners were more fully explained than otherwise they could be, and hence became the most efficient means of converting sinners to God.

And when St. Paul was arrested by the fury of the mob, and brought before the rulers at Jerusalem to answer for himself, instead of entering into a laboured argument in his justification, he simply related his experience of Divine things—how the Lord had appeared to him on his way to Damascus, and how he was delivered from his blindness by the ministry of Ananias. And this narration of facts carried such conviction to the heart of his judge that he exclaimed: "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian!" When a man speaks of the things that he has seen and felt, and especially

when the hearers have confidence in his honesty, intelligence, and veracity, it is hardly possible to resist the conviction which his words carry to the understanding and heart; and, indeed, there is something in the language of truth, when uttered from an honest heart, and with a sincere tongue, which bespeaks for it a candid attention; the very intonations of the voice, as well as the expressions of the countenance, indicate that the speaker designs to lead you into truth. Hence a certain, undefinable sobriety marks every feature of the countenance, and sits prominently upon the words of the lips of that man who utters the real sentiments of his heart. And a sanctified soul hath this honesty of heart, so that the words of truth dwell on his lips; and though the superficial hearer may suspect him for a time, and the Pharisee may affect to despise him, yet he will gradually gain the confidence of all, and finally win the affections and command the esteem of the good and pious of all ranks of Christians:—

“For honesty hath many gains, and well the wise have known
This will prosper to the end, and fill their house with gold.”

Tupper.

Had you, my dear M, declined to tell your experience of the love of God, do you think you could have enjoyed it so fully as you now do?

Could you have retained it for any length of time? I very much doubt it. "He that is ashamed of me, and of my words, before this wicked and adulterous generation, of him will I be ashamed before my Father and his holy angels," says Jesus Christ. And among the many gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, are the following: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." And the ten lepers that were cleansed by the word of Jesus Christ, the account of which is recorded in Luke xvii, 12-19, only one of whom, and he a Samaritan, "returned to give glory to God;" and to him the Saviour said, "Arise"—for he had prostrated himself "at his feet, giving him thanks,"—"go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole." What became of the others we cannot tell, but the probability is, that they again mingled with their brethren, the unbelieving Jews, and ultimately deprived themselves of the healing efficacy of Jesus Christ's powerful word, by not acknowledging his healing authority.

There is an instructive lesson to be derived from this narrative. The grateful leper, feeling his indebtedness to the Lord Jesus, "turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God." Glorified God! In whatever other way we

may glorify God, we learn from this, that by an humble acknowledgment of our dependence on him for his blessings, and more particularly for the healing efficacy of his cleansing blood, we thereby glorify his name, for this is an acknowledgment of his power, goodness and veracity.

Nor is it enough to acknowledge these attributes in general terms, but we must, if we would benefit ourselves and others, be particular and definite in the relation of our experience of Divine things. And though we may not be able to dive into the depths of the ocean of Divine love, and fully explain the manner of His working, yet we may be sufficiently particular to give an intelligible account of the working of the Spirit—may explain with sufficient particularity the dealings of God with our souls, to make it profitable to all those who are earnestly seeking after the same blessing.

Besides, this acknowledgment of the love of God commits us to the cause in a way from which we cannot well retreat. As Whitefield said to Charles Wesley, soon after the conversion of the latter, when, the former urging him to go into the fields and preach, he objected, on account of his weakness of faith; “That is the very way to strengthen your faith; for you

will have taken a stand from which you cannot well retreat." Charles Wesley went, and found the words of Whitefield verified. And so all those whom the Lord has blessed with perfect love will find, that by an humble confession of what God has done for them, on all suitable occasions, their faith will be increased, their hope and love confirmed, and their courage greatly invigorated, for they will have taken a stand from which they cannot well go back; and it will, moreover, be a means of guarding them against any inconsistency of conduct, for they will instinctively say, "We have taken the vows of our God upon us, and we must now guard against *charging God foolishly, or sinning with our lips*, lest we bring a reproach upon his name, and a disgrace upon ourselves." This will also encourage others who are seeking after the same blessing, to pursue after it, as well as point out the way in which they are to obtain it.

I say they are to do this on all suitable occasions. They need not blab it out at all times, before all companies, and never in a boasting way, as if anxious to proclaim their own righteousness, or to exhibit themselves as infallible examples of holiness. This would be to defeat the very object they ought to have in view. This

object is not to exalt themselves by proclaiming their own righteousness, but to exalt the grace of God in Christ Jesus, and to encourage others to seek it with full purpose of heart.

In exact conformity with this Scriptural view of the subject, Mr. Wesley exhorted his people to make known the goodness of God to their souls; and hence the establishment of class and band-meetings, love-feasts, and other religious associations, in which select meetings they might freely express their religious experience, and more especially make known the loving-kindness of God in redeeming them "from all iniquity."

I cannot, indeed, hardly conceive how a soul, filled with the fire of Divine love, can refrain from making it known. His intense desire to proclaim the goodness of God will impel him to open his mouth, that he may give expression to the feelings of his heart. Hence he says,—

"Then will I tell to sinners round
What a dear Saviour I have found;
I'll point to thy redeeming blood,
And say, Behold the way to God!"

It is time that I bring these letters to a close, though I have much matter yet in my heart on this most delightful theme, which, if life and health permit, I may express at some future time.*

* Thus far was written for the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, and the Letters which follow have been composed since.

In closing these remarks, permit me to say, that I am truly thankful to Almighty God for enabling me thus to express my most mature thoughts upon this deeply interesting subject. And if you, my dear M——, and any others of my readers, have received benefit from what I have written, give God the glory, and pray for the writer, that the remainder of his days may be sacredly devoted to the cause of Christian holiness, and that he may exemplify its purity and excellence in his spirit and practice. May we say with the poet I have so often quoted, and the re-perusal of whose hymns, while composing these letters, has heightened much, in my estimation, their unrivalled excellence, as well as more indelibly impressed their deep, experimental and spiritual meaning upon my heart, and thereby created a fresh glow of gratitude to God for raising up such a man as Charles Wesley, and giving him ability to furnish the Church with such inimitable productions of his evangelical heart and pen—may we, I say, adopt the following lines with a sincere faith and joyful hope :

“ Come, and all our sorrows chase,
Wipe the tears from every face ;
Gladness let us now obtain,
Partners of thy endless reign.

Death, the latest foe, destroy ;
 Sorrow then shall yield to joy ;
 Gloomy grief shall flee away,
 Swallow'd up in endless day."

In the mean time, I trust you, my dear M——, will join with me in the following prayer :—

" Our *friendship* SANCTIFY and BLESS,
Unmix'd with SELFISHNESS and PRIDE ;
 THY *glory* be our SINGLE AIM !
 In all our *intercourse* below,
 Still let us in THY *footsteps* go,
 And never MEET but in THY NAME.
 FIX on THYSELF our *single eye* ;
 Still let US ON THYSELF RELY,
 For all the help that each conveys ;
 The help as from THY HAND receive,
 And still to thee all GLORY GIVE,
 All THANKS, all MIGHT, all LOVE, all PRAISE."

LETTER XXVII.

Superior advantages of sanctification—Creates a keener relish for spiritual things—The judgment is enlightened—Can more heartily enter upon God's work—His faith is stronger—Speaks with more effect—If a minister, he preaches with more power—He shines the brighter—His example more hallowed—All these things present strong motives to seek for sanctification—Confirmed by poetry.

MY DEAR M——: To what has already been said in favour of the entire sanctification of the soul, I wish to add a few words on the superior advantages such possess in getting and doing good. As a sound, healthy man can eat his food with

a keener relish, and do his work with greater vigour than a sickly man, so a person who is restored to perfect spiritual health has a much more keen relish for spiritual food, and can labour in the vineyard of the Lord with an energy and perseverance to which the person who is still lingering under the disease of inbred sin is a stranger. All his faculties are in vigorous exercise—all duly balanced,—his understanding is enlightened, so that he can judge accurately respecting truth and duty—can discriminate not only between right and wrong as they are marked out in the great code of morals, but also between proprieties and improprieties ; and then his will is so bent that it follows with voluntary alacrity the dictates of his well-informed understanding, and all the affections of his heart, being purified from everything unholy, are placed on “ things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.”

Now this man is certainly fitted, both from the maturity of his judgment, the dictates of an enlightened conscience, the subordination of his will to the will of God, and the conformity of his desires to the standard of purity, to enter into the work of God in prayer and praise, and in the discharge of every duty, whether it be to God or man, with greater energy, delight, and

perseverance, than the man can who still labours under the darkening, weakening, and debasing influence of sin, whether outward or inward, whether it relates to the desires of the heart or the actions of the life. On this account, therefore, if there was no other, the sanctified soul is qualified both to receive and impart good far better than he otherwise could be.

But there are other reasons for this. The Holy Scriptures teach that according to our *faith* it shall be done unto us. Now faith to the soul is what the eye is to the body. And as the eye cannot see things accurately when any dust is lodged in it, or a disease infects it, so this eye of the soul cannot apprehend God as he is, cannot perceive clearly Divine truth, much less can it rely implicitly upon the promises of God, so long as it is obscured by sin, or weakened by its influence upon the soul. It is, therefore, only when these evil diseases are removed that the soul is prepared to exercise that strong faith in God, which cries out, "It shall be done."

Until the soul is entirely sanctified to God, there is less or more of unbelief mixed up with all we say or do. But when sin is removed from the heart, and it is filled with Divine love, this unbelief is also banished, and the soul looks up, being "strong in faith, giving glory to God."

And this faith, be it remembered, is not confined to the simple act of believing by which the soul is justified or sanctified, but it includes the holding fast upon the promises of God under all possible circumstances, through the whole progress of our pilgrimage; so that whatever we do, whether we sing, pray, converse, preach, or give of our substance, we do it all in faith, fully believing that God will accept and bless the labour of our hearts and hands.

Now a man that acts under the influence of this vigorous, this lively, this energetic faith, can certainly do much more in the cause of God than he who lingers along under the deadening effects of unbelief, not seeming to care whether he be successful in his efforts or not; and this sanctified soul cries out in the strong and vehement language of the poet:—

“ In the strength of God I rise,
I run to meet my foe ;
FAITH the word of God applies,
And lays the giant low ;
FAITH in Jesus’ conq’ring name
Slings the sin-destroying stone,
Points the word’s unerring aim,
And brings the monster down.”

Whenever the soul, armed with this mighty faith, that

“ Laughs at impossibilities,
And cries it shall be done,”

offers a prayer to God, he offers it in faith, believing that, inasmuch as he prays according to God's will, submitting himself and everything else to that will alone, his prayer will be answered, for he fully believes his

“Every promise true.”

Whenever he speaks in the name of his God, he believes He will bless his word either to the conviction, the conversion, the sanctification, the strengthening, or the comforting of those to whom he speaks, and therefore he does not “spend his strength for naught.”

Is he a minister? If he be thus consecrated to God, enjoying the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, his word will “distil as the dew upon the tender herb, and as the rain upon the grass.” His words will drop fatness upon the souls of God's people, and they will feel that this man speaks in the Holy Ghost, “with much assurance,” “in the demonstration of the Spirit, and with power,” because they have in their own hearts a lively sense of the truths which he utters, and the Spirit of God bears witness to their spirits that he is sent of God to preach unto them “Jesus and the resurrection.” And though all the sinners that hear him may not be converted, yet, when he addresses himself to

them, a conviction of the truth will fasten upon their consciences, and they will go away, not so much admiring the preacher, as condemning themselves; while the people of God will praise Him for sending them an ambassador who has been made unto them a "savour of life unto life."

Such a man ascends the pulpit in the fear and love of God, being deeply impressed with an awful sense of the tremendous responsibility he acts under while he endeavours to unfold the otherwise hidden truths of Divine revelation, and with his heart heaving under the pressure he feels, he earnestly lifts it in prayer to God that he will assist him with the energies of the Holy Spirit that his word may be accompanied with the Divine unction, and that it may be carried in the demonstration of the Spirit to the consciences of all that hear him. 'This prayer is offered in faith. He believes that God, for Christ's sake, will hear him. He is not disappointed. His own soul is blessed—his heart is enlarged—his understanding is fruitful—the word of God is like "fire shut up in his bones"—and he pours forth a stream of Divine truth with which the heritage of the Lord is watered, and every plant thrives and grows, bearing fruit even unto perfection.

This is the man of God : his soul is sanctified, and he has been sanctified, that is, set apart for a minister of the sanctuary, and he speaks with an earnestness, a sincerity, and with a power in the Holy Ghost, which cannot well be mistaken for mere empty declamation. It is not empty declamation. No well-informed man attributes this to him. All such feel in their inmost souls that he speaks what he knows, and utters the genuine sentiments of his heart, of a heart that

“ Swells unutterably full
Of glory, and of God.”

Under the influence of this holy feeling, he adopts the following language of the sweet but powerful poet of our Israel :—

“ My talents, gifts, and graces, Lord,
Into thy blessed hands I give ;
And let me live to preach thy word ;
And let me to thy glory live ;
My every sacred moment spend,
In publishing the sinner’s Friend.

“ Enlarge, inflame, and fill my heart
With boundless charity divine !
So shall I all my strength exert,
And love them with a zeal like thine ;
And lead them to thy open side,
The sheep for whom the Shepherd died.”

The same may be said, in some measure at least, of every holy Christian. In his pious walk and conversation in the private circles in which he moves, in the constant exercise of that faith

which unites him to God through Christ, he carries a hallowing influence with him, draws constantly around him the souls that are seeking after an interest in Christ, or are yearning after full redemption in his blood, and points them in faith to the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." This faith becomes an active principle, impelling its possessor on in acts of charity to the souls and bodies of men—enables him to face dangers, to overcome obstacles, to encounter and conquer opposition, and to triumph in the Lord at all times.

Again, Christians are compared to stars, and even to the sun in the firmament, and these stars cannot emit their rays clearly while surrounded with clouds, nor can the sun exhibit its brilliancy except the atmosphere be free from mists or clouds. Just so the Christian, while surrounded by the clouds of darkness, or while the rays of his character are intercepted by the mists arising from the pool of inbred sin which yet remains in him, cannot until entirely sanctified to God, exhibit that clear light which shines forth in the tempers, the words, and the actions of a holy Christian. In order, therefore, that he may perfectly answer the end of his calling, namely, to be a "light in the world," and let his "light so shine before men that they may see his good

works and glorify his Father who is in heaven," he must be "cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit," be "holy in all manner of conversation," walking continually as "seeing Him who is invisible." Hence, the soul that pants after God, that longs to be useful to his fellow-men, and feels unceasingly his dependence on God for faith, light, and love, adopts with the utmost earnestness the following language of the poet:—

"God of all-sufficient grace,
My God in Christ thou art !
Bid me walk before thy face,
Till I am PURE in heart.
Till, transform'd by FAITH divine,
I gain that perfect love unknown,
Bright in all thine image shine
By putting on thy Son."

When this deep and earnest prayer is answered, so that they shine "bright in all His image," then are they qualified, and not till then, to exhibit such an example to those with whom they have intercourse, as shall lead them to the fountain which washes away the foulest stains of sin. Then it may be said of them in truth, that they

"Beyond the reach of mortals, spread
Their light where'er they go ;
And heavenly influences shed
On all the world below."

Yes, and "their lustre shall still increase, unto the perfect day."

Now, what a motive does this three-fold view of the subject present, to induce the sincere Christian never to rest until he is entirely sanctified to God! I know full well that it is the honest desire of every converted soul, from the moment of his conversion—though he may not have attained to all the heights and depths of perfect love—to get and do all the good he can. He desires, above all things, **that** others—his near relations, his neighbours, and indeed all the world—should participate with him in the unspeakable blessing of pardoning love. Yet he often finds that “when he would do good, evil is present with him, so that the good he would, he doeth it not.” His faith is comparatively weak, his love is not of that ardent kind which characterizes the holy soul, and his zeal in the cause of God often flags for want of a strong principle of internal energy to urge him forward in the path of duty. But let him get his soul “baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire,” with that “holy fire” which shall consume all his sins, and fill him with strong faith and love, and let him feel that inextinguishable zeal for God’s glory which leads him forth to make sacrifices for Jesus Christ, and he will find himself in a new element, moving, or rather being moved, under the promptings of a holy impulse, and

animated with higher hopes and brighter anticipations of ultimate success in his work.

There can therefore be no doubt that a sanctified soul is prepared both to get and do more good in the world than he otherwise could either get or do. His nature is freed from the weakening disease of sin—his faith is stronger—his love is warmer—his light shines the brighter, and consequently his whole man is prepared to enter into the work of God with a more enlightened understanding, and with a much more vigorous action than he could possibly do while destitute of this unspeakable blessing.

I cannot conclude this letter more appropriately than in the words of the poet I have so often quoted, and which I delight to refer to, because they exceed any other poetry ever printed on the subject of perfect love. He says respecting this holy soul:—

“In a land of corn and wine,
His lot shall be below ;
Comforts there and blessings join,
And milk and honey flow !
Jacob’s well is in his soul ;
Gracious dews his heavens distil :
Fill his soul, already full,
And shall forever fill.”

May you, my dear M., find this to be your “lot,” that your soul may be forever full “of glory and of God!”

LETTER XXVIII.

Must be fitted for death here—A definition of death—The effect of separation—Distinction between death and annihilation—Matter itself indestructible—Love of life natural to all—Its use—The more holy, the more we desire to live—Anecdote of a preacher—Of Whitefield and Tennent—Nevertheless we must all die—Death a curse—It shall be destroyed—Love of life buoys up the believer—Cure of melancholy.

MY DEAR M—— : I think it cannot be disputed but that a sanctified soul is prepared to die. It is equally certain that none others are thus prepared. Unless we adopt the absurd notion of a death purgatory, or a purgatory after death, it is indisputable that a soul must be purified from sin here, or never enter the heaven of holiness hereafter. This, however, has been sufficiently demonstrated in my previous letters, and, indeed, is plainly implied in every requisition of the gospel respecting the necessity of purity of heart to prepare us to see the face of God in peace. "Without holiness no man shall see God."

Without saying more on this branch of the subject, my design in the present letter is to speak on the subject of DEATH itself.

But what is death? However difficult it may be to give such a philosophical definition of

death as to free it from all obscurities and objections, I think such a definition may be given as will answer our purpose, and present the subject clearly to the mind. *Death*, then, is the effect of *separation*. You separate a limb from the body, and the separated limb dies as a necessary consequence. Separate a vegetable from the earth, whence it derives its nourishment, and the vegetable dies.

This definition will enable us understand the nature of that penalty denounced upon our first parents, if they should presume to violate the command of God, which prohibited them from eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die;" that is, thou shalt be separated from communion with me, thy God, and separated from the garden of pleasure in which thou wast destined to dwell, and finally thy soul and body shall be separated. All this, and much more, was included in that original sentence denounced upon Adam, as a punishment for his sin.

So also, the spiritual death which comes upon the soul as a consequence of sinning against God, includes, 1. A separation of the soul from communion with God; and, 2. Provided the sinner dies in his sins, an everlasting separation, a

“banishment from the presence of God, and the glory of his power.”

The death, therefore, which we now contemplate, is a separation of the soul and body, and then, at putrefaction, a separation of the component parts of the body itself; so that each element flies off to its native element, and there mingles again together—air to air, water to water, fire to fire, and earth to earth. This is the death of the body. So says Tupper,

“And corruption, closely noted, is but a dissolving of the parts:
The parts remain, and nothing lost to build a better whole.”

We must carefully distinguish between *death* and *annihilation*.* This latter is a word that cannot be understood literally; for not anything which exists, so far as we know, is susceptible of annihilation; that is, of being reduced back to nothing—to a nonentity. All that matter, in its grossest form, or most refined essence, is capable of undergoing by the separation of its elementary principles, is a modification of its existence; for it exists, in all its essential properties, as much after this separation as it did

* The thought of annihilation is painful! None can wish it but to flee from guilt. Dr. Young very justly says:—

“Should'st thou be good—how infinite thy loss!

Guilt only makes annihilation gain.

Bless'd scheme! which life deprives of comfort, death

Of hope; and which vice alone recommends.”

before, only it exists in a modified form. Thus the body that dies mingles again with the elements of which it was composed, and goes to form other bodies, either of vegetables or animals; and thus continues to change its form from one vegetable or animal to another, *ad infinitum*, so far as we know, but never ceases to be, in some modified form, always perceptible to the senses whenever it comes within their range.* Annihilation, therefore, is a word the literal signification of which cannot be explained by experiment, either by the process of nature, or by any chemical analysis.

Not so death, or the separation of those parts of which bodies are composed. This is taking place daily, hourly, nay, momentarily, before our eyes. Our friends are dying, all animals are dying, and the vegetables are decaying continually in the midst of us. In the midst of this ever-changing state of beings and things what do we see? We see a fulfillment of the original decree denounced upon sinning Adam: "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." And under this decree we find ourselves included. We are doomed to death. Our bodies must soon be separated from our souls,

* There is much truth in the following line of Dr. Young:—

"From human mould we eat our daily bread."

and then the bodies themselves must be separated at putrefaction; so that their elementary principles shall fly off, and mingle with their native elements.

Have we reason to fear death? Surely those who are fully prepared to meet it, by being entirely sanctified, have not. Yet I apprehend that most of even these have an instinctive aversion to death, and can say from their own experience,—

“How deep implanted in the heart of man,
The dread of death!”

Not, indeed, because they fear to meet it as a conquered enemy, but chiefly because it is an enemy with whom—though conquered, he is not slain—they must contend, and finally overcome, in order to enter into life everlasting.

But however much or little we may fear death, we all have an inextinguishable love of life. And I know not but that the more holy a person is, the longer he wishes to live; because he is conscious that while he lives, he can be instrumental in both getting and doing more and more good. For though he can say with St. Paul, that for him “to die is gain,” yet “to live is Christ;” that is, is for the glory of Christ; and it is for the glory of Christ that he should be instrumental in the conversion and sanctification

of immortal souls ; and the longer such a man lives, and diligently labours in the vineyard of the Lord, the more souls he may be the means of bringing to Christ, and thus surround him with a wider circle and a more brilliant halo of glory.

You, my dear M., will join with me, I doubt not, in admiring the saying I once heard drop from the lips of a devoted minister in the pulpit, namely, " That he would greatly prefer, were it left to his choice, to be an itinerant minister of Jesus Christ, than to be an angel in heaven. Yea," said he, " I would not exchange places with Gabriel ! Why not ? Because, while I am thus employed, I may be instrumental of snatching some sinners as brands from the burning ; but if I were a disembodied spirit, I could no longer preach ' Jesus Christ and him crucified,' but must be content in enjoying my rest in heaven. I therefore wish to live as long as God shall see fit to prolong my life, that I may promote the glory of Christ in the salvation of sinners."

This was a wise saying, indicative of an enlightened understanding and a pious heart. Thus the poet expresses it :—

" I would the precious time redeem,
And longer live for this alone,

To spend, and be spent, for them alone,
Who have not yet my Saviour known :
Fully on these my mission prove,
And only breathe, to breathe thy love."

This brings to my mind an anecdote I once heard respecting Whitefield. It seems that Whitefield was in the habit of sighing out, every now and then, "O that my work were done, that I might go to heaven!" Being in company one day with a number of clergymen, among whom was the holy Mr. Tennent, Whitefield, as usual, sighed out, "O that my work were done, that I might receive my reward!" and then appealed to the brethren present, whether that was not a just sentiment. To which they all—except Mr. Tennent, who said nothing—assented. Whitefield then appealed to Tennent, and wished to know what he thought of it. This holy and considerate man replied, "I think it is a very foolish wish. What would you think, if you had a hired man at work in your field, who, instead of working on with cheerfulness, were to look up at the sun every now and then, and sigh out, 'O that my work were done, that the sun would set, that I might receive my wages?' Would you not conclude that he was a lazy, mercenary being, who was more anxious to get through his day's work, and get his wages, than he was to serve his employer?"

These sensible remarks opened their eyes to the folly of expressing a continual desire to die and go to heaven, instead of being content to labour on cheerfully in the vineyard of the Lord, striving to do all the good we can, knowing that the longer we live, the more we suffer and do in our Master's service, the greater will be our reward, and the brighter our crown in heaven.

But we must all die ! And the prayer of the holy soul is expressed in the following words of the poet :—

“O that without a lingering groan,
I may the welcome word receive ;
My body with my charge lay down,
And cease at once to work and live !”

Death is a curse, and therefore must be endured as a mark of God's displeasure at sin. And surely we cannot look at this curse with pleasure, only as it is an entrance into life, after which all living animals long. I say all living animals long for life. And this is a mark of God's benevolence—his fixing in the very nature of man this inextinguishable love of life, and, of course, an aversion to death. Hence we instinctively shrink back from everything which threatens death. To avoid it, man will submit to all manner of hardships, privations, and sufferings, and will take the most nauseous

food in order to prolong his life. "All that a man hath, will he give for his life," is a truth written in every man's breast. Were it not for this strong love of life, the world would soon become depopulated. For who else would submit to the pains, the labours, the privations, the disappointments, and the sufferings of the present life? I apprehend no one! If we were entirely indifferent to life—could embrace death with the same pleasure that we go to sleep, eat our food, or enjoy the society of our friends, all would die soon, and the earth would become a barren desert.

It appears, therefore, that God has wisely and benevolently implanted this inextinguishable love of life in every human heart, and he has provided a means by which it may be gratified to its fullest extent, for "he that doeth the will of God, abideth forever." It is, therefore, to this innate principle of our nature that God addresses himself, in order to induce us to embrace the Lord Jesus as our Almighty Saviour. "He that believeth on him, shall have everlasting life." Hence the hope of life—of everlasting life after death—has sustained the holy Christian in the midst of his trials, supported the martyr in his pangs, and stimulates the believer in Christ to perseverance amidst the

oppositions, the crosses, and the sufferings, with which he may be called to contend, to the termination of his pilgrimage. It is respecting such that the poet says,—

“ Who are these array’d in white,
Brighter than the noon-day sun ?
Foremost of the sons of light ;
Nearest the eternal throne ?
These are they that bore the cross ;
Nobly for their Master stood ;
Suff’rers in his righteous cause ;
Foll’wers of the risen* God.”

This hope reconciles us to death. We no longer view it as an enemy merely, but as a friend, come to admit us into the presence of Him who came to conquer this enemy, and convert him, against his will, into, and actually makes him do the office of, a friend ! Indulging in this blooming hope, he can adopt the following words of the same unrivalled poet :—

“ Jesus, in thy great Name I go,
To conquer *death*, my final foe ;
And when I quit this cumb’rous clay,
And soar on angels’ wings away,
My soul the second *death* defies,
And reigns ETERNAL in the *skies*.”

I thank God for this view of death ! To what am I indebted for it ? To Christianity. This has brought life and immortality to light. It

* I have substituted “risen” for “dying,” which the poet used, for very obvious reasons.

has not only brought life and immortality to light, but it has provided a medium by which the sinner may be reconciled to God, and may be thoroughly sanctified, and thereby fitted to participate in those pure joys which "are at his right hand forever more." Hence I anticipate the day, when it shall be said of me, as well as of my dear M., and all those who have "washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb,"

"And let this feeble body fail,
And let it faint or die ;
My soul shall quit the mournful vale,
And soar to worlds on high :
Shall join the disembodied saints,
And find its long-sought rest,—
That only bliss for which it pants,
In the Redeemer's breast."

In the mean time we may adopt the following, as the anxious inquiry of our hearts :—

"And am I only born to die !
And must I suddenly comply
With nature's stern decree ?
What after death for me remains ?
Celestial joys, or hellish pains,
To all eternity."

Hence the necessity of employing ourselves, while our probation lasts, to the best possible advantage. And surely every pious heart will adopt the following language of the same hymn from which I before quoted :—

“How then ought I on earth to live,
While God prolongs the kind reprieve,
And props the house of clay?
My sole concern, my single care,
To watch, and tremble, and prepare
Against that fatal day.”

And to guard ourselves against the gloom which the contemplation of death tends to cast upon our minds, let us look beyond the tomb to those fields of immortality, “where our possession lies.” How well calculated to inspire this thought are the following words of Young:—

“See, from the tomb, as from an humble shrine,
Truth, radiant goddess! sallies on my soul,
And puts delusion’s dusky train to flight;
Dispels the mists our sulky passions cause,
From objects low, terrestrial, and obscene,
And shows the real estimate of things.”

May you, my dear M., and I, and all who believe in immortality, so live, that whenever death comes, it may “show us the real estimate of things,” and find us fully prepared for “an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our God!”

LETTER XXIX.

Resurrection of the body an article of belief peculiar to Christianity—Obscurely revealed to the Jews—A wonderful truth—The germ preserved—Fully set forth in the Sacred Scriptures—Incorporated in the Christian system—What sort of body shall be raised—Not the same that was deposited in the earth—A spiritual body—Thus the triumph of Christianity—Quotation from Charles Wesley's poetry—From Tupper—A thrilling truth—Reason why the body must be sanctified—Hence prepared to participate with the soul in the joys of heaven—We should therefore keep our bodies pure—Soul and body act conjointly, and therefore share in the reward—Quotation from Young's Night Thoughts.

MY DEAR M——: One of the most glorious truths of Divine revelation is that which asserts the resurrection of the just and unjust. And this is a truth peculiar to Christianity. Heathenism taught it not. Its belief in the immortality of the soul was more conjectural than otherwise, and as to the resurrection of the body, and its consequent immortality, it never dreamed of such a thing. It remained, therefore, for Christianity to announce this truth in plain and intelligible language, and thus to render that certain which had been aforetime left not only in doubt, but altogether unheard of throughout all the Gentile world. And it appears that in our Saviour's time the Jews themselves had become so blinded, that however clearly some of their prophets might have proclaimed this

truth, they had lost sight of it, and hence, while they marvelled when He taught them the spiritual resurrection of the soul from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, He said unto them, "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." This was a truth which it seems they had never thought of believing; for though it had been taught by some of their prophets, it had been so obscurely expressed, that it had not been incorporated as an article of their religious belief—hence their astonishment at its announcement by our Saviour, in the above quoted words.

This, to be sure, is a wonderful truth! To think that these bodies which have been mouldering in the dust for centuries, shall finally be raised by the power of God, and made "like unto Christ's glorious body," is a truth far surpassing the human understanding, and could be believed only on an express declaration of God himself, and this declaration has been made. All that is necessary to form the identity of the human body, shall, it seems, be preserved during all the mutations through which matter shall pass from death to the resurrection, and this

shall be the germ of which the future body shall be formed by that Almighty hand which shall raise it from the dead.

That this is a doctrine of the Sacred Scriptures no one can seriously doubt, however mysterious it may appear to human philosophy, or incredible to the eye of human reason. The apostle Paul in the 15th chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, sets it forth in the most express terms, in the following words: "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there be no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ; whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."—Ver. 12-19.

How any man can read these words of the apostle, and then doubt of the resurrection of

the dead, I am at a loss to conceive, as they assert most positively the certainty of the fact, so much so as to say, that if this do not come to pass, the whole Christian system is a fabrication. Even the resurrection of Christ, of which there is no fact of Divine revelation more surely asserted, falls to the ground, and of course, all the apostolic preaching, as it was all grounded upon it, is proved false. The fact, therefore, of the resurrection of the body is incorporated into the Christian system, and it is as much an article of faith as is the being and attributes of God, or any other truth whatever.

In the subsequent part of this same chapter, namely, from verse 35 to 49, the apostle answers the querist, of what sort of bodies the saints shall come forth from the grave; and he shows that it is not that same body that was deposited in the earth that shall be raised, any more than it is the same seed that was sown that springs up and bears fruit. "It was sown a natural body, but it is raised a spiritual body." So changed is this raised body, that it would appear the apostle could find no word in the language to represent the idea that he had of it, and therefore he uses a compound term, "spiritual body," in order to represent it, indicating that it is of such a nature as neither to be wholly

spiritual nor wholly material, but partaking somewhat of the nature of both spirit and matter, or, as he terms it in another verse, a "celestial body," in distinction from a "terrestrial body." Whatever may be its nature, however it may be changed, refined, or spiritualized, we are certain that it will be immortalized, be entirely freed from corruption, and put beyond the reach of decay; and thus will be finished the grand work of redemption, not only in the emancipation of the soul from the slavery of sin, but the deliverance of the body from the bondage of corruption. This is the complete triumph of Christ over the power and work of Satan in the introduction of sin into our world, by which came "death and all our woe." Death itself shall be destroyed, and one universal life shall exist and flourish; so that in the "new heavens and new earth," which God shall have formed out of the present heavens and earth destroyed, nothing shall ever again "hurt or destroy;" but one eternal "day without night," life without death, pleasure without pain, union without separation, shall forever exist, live, and flourish in perennial growth and exquisite happiness.

This whole subject is beautifully unfolded in words of poetic fire, creating a melody as sweet as ever saluted a mortal ear, and yet as grand

as ever expanded before a human understanding, in those well-known, though but seldom sung, lines of Charles Wesley. O read them, my dear M., and meditate on every word you read, in the following stanzas, which must have sprung from a heart thoroughly penetrated with a firm belief in the future retribution of the righteous dead, and their resurrection from their dusty tombs. Surely the poet's pen must have been dipped in the oil of sanctifying grace to enable it to run so smoothly and nimbly over the subject of the final restoration of all things, and to have painted the sublime scene in such varied and beautiful colours:—

“ Stand th’ omnipotent decree ;
Jehovah’s will be done ;
Nature’s end we wait to see,
And hear her final groan.
Let this earth dissolve, and blend
In death the wicked and the just ;
Let those pond’rous orbs descend,
And grind us into dust :—

“ Rests secure the righteous man ;
At his Redeemer’s beck,
Sure t’ emerge and rise again,
And mount above the wreck :
Lo ! the heavenly spirit towers,
Like flames o’er nature’s funeral pyre ;
Triumphs in immortal powers,
And claps his wings of fire.

“ Nothing hath the just to lose,
By worlds on worlds destroy’d ;

Far beneath his feet he views,
 With smiles, the flaming void ;
 Sees this universe renew'd,—
 The grand millennial reign begun ,
 Shouts, with all the sons of God,
 Around th' eternal throne !

“ Resting in this glorious hope,
 To be at last restored,
 Yield we now our bodies up,
 To earthquake, plague, or sword :
 List'ning for the call divine,
 The latest trumpet of the seven,
 Soon our soul and dust shall join,
 And both fly up to heaven.”

The same thought is expressed, though in less beautiful language and poetical grandeur, yet equally true to inspiration, by Tupper, in his chapter on “ Immortality,” a chapter which you, my dear M., I know have read attentively, for I find it full of your marks, especially these lines which speak of the love of God displayed in this sublime work of the resurrection of the dead, and hence I conclude, that this is a subject on which you are wont to contemplate. The following are the words to which I allude :—

“ Why should it seem a thing impossible to thee, O man of many doubts,
 That God shall wake the dead, and give this mortal immor-
 tality ?
 Is it that such riches are insearchable, the bounty too profuse ?
 And yet, what gift, to cease or change, is worthy of the King
 Almighty ?
 For, remember, the moment thou art not, thou mightest as well
 not have been.”

But poetry apart, is not this a subject on which angel minds must ponder with supreme delight? To behold the dead, small and great, "new rising from the tomb," coming forth at the command of God, renovated, refined from all those grosser compages with which they were before disfigured, clogged, and rendered mortal, now made "like unto Christ's glorious body," all "immortal and divine!" Surely, if at the first creation, "all the sons of God shouted for joy," those same "first-born sons of light" must raise a more thrilling shout of praise to God at beholding this new creation rising into existence by the command of the most high God! And with what holy delight will the redeemed souls hail the appearance of those raised bodies, their old companions in tribulation, in labour, in watching, and fasting?

O, my dear M., with what rapturous delight may the saints look forward, and joyfully anticipate the day, when their bodies shall be raised, reanimated, immortalized, and thus become the fit receptacles for their purified souls, and they shall unitedly enter the paradise of God, to go no more out forever and forever! This is a consummation not only "to be devoutly wished," but to be looked for with the most longing ex-

pectation, and laboured after with the utmost diligence and steady perseverance.

Now we see a reason why the apostle prayed that we might be “sanctified throughout soul, BODY, and spirit,” and that we might be “preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus,” in the clouds of heaven, to awake our slumbering dust, and to fashion us “like unto Christ’s glorious body.” We see also a reason why he said, “Your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost. Therefore, if any man defile the temple of God,”—that is, defile the sanctified body by sin,—“him will God destroy.” These bodies of ours which have been thus sanctified—set apart for the service of God, and in which the Spirit of God dwelt, and by whose holy influence they have been actuated in all their movements, have been watched over by our Divine Shepherd, even after they were deposited in the tomb; all that is necessary to form their identity has been preserved amid all the mutations through which they may have passed from death to the resurrection, and then, at “the voice of the Son of God,” they “shall come forth,” as the poet teaches us to sing,—

“From earth they shall quickly remove,
And mount to their native abode,
The house of their Father above,—
The palace of angels and God.”

Yes, at that glad hour,—

“Our mourning is all at an end,
When, raised by the life-giving Word,
We see the new city descend,
Adorn'd as a bride for her Lord :
The city so holy and clean,
No sorrow can breathe in the air :
No gloom of affliction or sin :
No shadow of evil is there !”

The bodies, therefore, that have participated with the souls in labour and suffering, in joy and sorrow, in temptation and deliverance, in all the meanderings of human life, shall share with them, after the morning of the resurrection, in all the joys, the rewards, and all the glories of heaven. They shall be completely fitted, not only by having been sanctified to the service of God while on earth, but also, and more especially, by the refining process of the grave, by which all the mere fleshy particles are destroyed, and all the carnal propensities have been forever annihilated, to be as the angels of God, “who neither marry nor are given in marriage,”—pure, æthereal beings, or, as the apostle expresses it, “spiritual bodies,”—by which we are to understand that they are as nearly assimilated into the likeness of angels as they can be, without participating with them entirely in their purely spiritual nature—they being so entirely

changed, that their bodies themselves are no longer earthly, or fleshly, but spiritual and heavenly.

O what a motive does this present to impel us forward in the grand work to which we are called! To think that these bodies of ours, while actuated by our souls, may, by being consecrated to the service of God, be made subservient to the advancement of the cause of Christ—what an inducement is this, to employ our tongues, our hands, and feet, with all our material faculties, in the holy service of Almighty God! How careful should we therefore be not to defile our bodies by any sinful indulgence, but to “keep our garments unspotted from the world!” The chief instrument, indeed, of sin, is the body. It is through the medium of the body that temptations are presented to the soul, to draw off its allegiance from its rightful sovereign, and whenever the soul yields to the temptation, the body itself is precipitated with the soul into the vortex of sin. Hence the necessity of watching these natural “avenues of evil,” that no temptation be permitted to gain an ascendancy over us, or to start us aside from the straightforward course of obedience to the commands of God. For this the poet prays in the following words:—

“Take my soul and *body's* powers ;
Take my mem'ry, mind, and will ;
All my goods, and all my hours ;
All I know, and all I feel ;
All I think, or speak, or do ;
Take my heart, but make it new.”

Do you not perceive, my dear M., how the poet recognises the truth I am endeavouring to inculcate, when he prays that his *body* may be taken into the service of God, and not only “all he *thinks*,” but “all he *speaks*,”—for we speak with our *tongues* as well as think with our *minds*—may be taken under his direction. Indeed, while we continue in this world, the soul and body are so closely united, that they must work jointly ; the body is the instrument of conveying ideas or thoughts to the mind, and then the mind puts forth its volitions, and moves the body to action ; and all this is done, reciprocally acting upon each other,—like true bosom friends, who move each other forward by mutual acts of kindness,—until they are separated by death, when the soul flies away to paradise, and the body, no longer moved by an active spirit, sinks away to the grave, there to sleep until the resurrection. Then it may be said and sung,—

“Angels catch the' approving sound,
Bow, and bless the just award ;
Hail the heir with glory crown'd,
Now rejoicing with his Lord,—

Fuller joys ordain'd to know,
Waiting for the gen'ral doom,
When the' archangel's trump shall blow—
RISE, YE DEAD, TO JUDGMENT COME !"

This, my dear M., is the consummation of our wishes ! What more, indeed, can we ask ? Both our souls and bodies, having been sanctified by the blood of Christ, "washed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit,"—the one passed from the other immediately into the presence of God, and the other passed through the grave, and ultimately is raised by the power of God,—are finally reunited, and now spend an eternity in "praising God and the Lamb !" This is "above all we could ask or think." Let us therefore, this once, unite in ascribing "honour, and glory, and power, and dominion, to God and the Lamb, forever and ever."

The following lines of Young are so full to the point, as well as expressive of the most joyous and triumphant faith in the resurrection of the body, and its consequent immortality in endless felicity—and as I know that you, my dear M., delight to luxuriate in the prolific field of sacred poetry—I cannot conclude this letter more appropriately, than by quoting them. They are as follows :—

"The theme, the joy, how then shall man sustain !
O the burst gates ' crush'd sting ' demolish'd throne !

Last gasp of vanquish'd death! Shout earth and heaven!
 This sum of good to man! whose nature, then,
 Took wing, and mounted with him from the tomb!
 Then, then, I rose; then first humanity
 Triumphant pass'd the crystal ports of light,
 (Stupendous guest!) and seiz'd eternal youth,
 Seiz'd in our name. E'er since, 'tis blasphemous
 To call man mortal. Man's mortality
 Was then transferr'd to death; and heaven's duration
 Unalienably seal'd to this frail frame,
 'This child of dust—Man, all-immortal! hail!
 Hail, Heaven! all-lavish of strange gifts to man!
 Thine all the glory; man's the boundless bliss.

* * * * *

Bound, every heart! and every bosom, burn!
 O what a scale of miracles is here!
 Its lowest round, high planted on the skies;
 Its towering summit, lost beyond the thought
 Of man or angel! O that I could climb
 The wonderful ascent, with equal praise!
 Praise! flow for ever (if astonishment
 Will give thee leave;) my praise! for ever flow;
 Praise ardent, cordial, constant; to high Heaven
 More fragrant, than Arabia sacrificed,
 And all her spicy mountains in a flame."

The wonderful theme which inspired the poet's heart, and gave such eloquence to his pen, was that of redemption, including the death and resurrection of the Son of God; but from this sublime fact he deduced the certainty of the resurrection of the pious dead, and hence he sung,—

"O when will death (now stingless,) like a friend,
 Admit me of their choir? O when will death
 This mouldering, old partition-wall throw down?
 Give beings, one in nature, one abode?
 O death divine! that giv'st us to the skies!"

LETTER XXX.

We are saved by grace—Rewarded according to our works—These two truths reconciled—Salvation one thing, reward another—All saved by grace, the best not excepted—Yet rewarded according to our works—Hence the different degrees of glory will be in proportion to our works—Harmony of these two truths, salvation by grace, and reward of works—Every pious work will be rewarded—What a motive this to diligence—For every act of obedience shall be rewarded.

MY DEAR M——: Having attended to the resurrection of the dead in the former letter, it seems proper to inquire now respecting the rewards which the saints shall have bestowed on them by the Judge of heaven and earth.

There are two truths equally revealed in the Sacred Scriptures, and which, therefore, equally claim our attention and challenge our belief. The first is, that we are *saved by grace*. That our salvation from first to last, including the entire scheme of redemption by Jesus Christ, our conviction for sin, justification, sanctification, and our preservation in holiness, and our glorification at the right hand of God, is all of grace—that it all originated, is carried on, and perfected by the free grace of God in Christ Jesus—this is a truth unequivocally revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and is attested by every experimental Christian from the creation down to the present

time. Let this, therefore, remain an established axiom in our theological creed.

The second is no less certain, namely, that we are rewarded *according to our works*. This is also unequivocally asserted in numerous passages of Holy Scripture, and so precious are the good works of the pious considered by our Saviour, that he said, "Whosoever giveth a cup of cold water to any, in the name of a disciple, he shall not lose his reward."

Now, our business is to reconcile these two truths, and to show not only that they are not contradictory one to the other, but that they subsist in perfect harmony, and consequently that they support and defend each other.

Salvation, then, is one thing, and *reward* another. A man may be saved by an amazing act of Divine grace, and yet have no reward. Thus, the thief upon the cross was saved, but he had no reward, merely because he had done no good works. This is the case also with all those who die in infancy—they are saved by an act of grace, merely because Jesus Christ made an unconditional atonement for them, and thus bought them off from the curse of the Adamic law. Though thus saved, they have no reward. So also, I suppose, thousands are saved upon a dying bed, who, in their last moments, repent,

believe in Christ, and ask for mercy, and are snatched from the burning pool, by an astonishing act of Divine grace—while others are “saved so as by fire,” that is, they do but just escape, in consequence of the imperfect manner in which they have prepared themselves for death and judgment, owing to the incorrect views they had respecting the plan of salvation. These all have escaped from their sins by an amazing act of Divine grace extended to them for the sake of what Jesus Christ did for them, and hence they will finally sing the song of deliverance to God’s unbounded love in redeeming them from their sins, and washing them in the blood of the Lamb, in such an undeserved way and time.

Indeed we are all, the best of us not excepted, saved by grace. Were it not so, we could not be saved at all, for “we have all sinned, and come short of the glory of God,” and therefore need pardon and sanctification to fit us for the enjoyment of God in heaven. And even the most holy among us have, at times, been guilty of many aberrations from the strict rule of justice, and therefore have fallen under the curse of God’s holy laws, and should therefore be condemned, were it not for the grace of God in Christ Jesus, which saves us from the guilt thus incurred, washes out the stains of sin, and

thereby prepares us to shout the praises of redeeming love forever. It is, moreover, by the grace of God that we are kept from falling, preserved from moment to moment in the path of purity, and "strengthened with might in the inner man," to do and suffer His righteous will. This is all of grace, from first to last. Hence all who are saved at all, are saved by grace, and must therefore shout in the great day, "Grace, grace unto it!"

Nevertheless, such is the goodness of God, that he is pleased to reward every act of obedience to his commands, whether it be by way of sacrifice of property, reputation, labour in his cause, or acts of mercy and charity to the souls and bodies of his needy followers and others. Hence it is said, that every man shall be "*rewarded according to his works.*" This, as is well known, is declared in numerous places in the Holy Scriptures. Thus in that well known passage, Matt. xxv, 31-46, in which the distinction is marked between the righteous and the wicked at the last day, and the reasons assigned why the one shall be received into the kingdom of heaven, and the other "shall go away into everlasting punishment," into that "lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels." To the righteous the King is represented as saying,

"Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was a hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. . . . Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Now it is manifest from this, and other similar passages which occur in various parts of the Sacred Writings, that those who are found at the right hand of God at the last day, will all be rewarded according as their works have been in this world; and hence it appears reasonable to believe, that the several degrees of glory shall be in exact proportion to the measure and weight of their good works; for these will form the criterion by which they shall be tried when God "comes to make up his jewels."

The apostle speaks of the different degrees of reward in 1 Cor. xv, 41, 42, where he says, "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead." These words certainly indicate that there shall

be different degrees of glory among those who are raised from the dead, as much so as there are different degrees of brightness and splendour among the stars of the firmament; and this comparison had long before been authorized by the prophet Daniel, who had said, that “they that turn many to righteousness should shine as the stars, forever and ever,” that is, they shall emit various degrees of splendour: and these shall be in proportion to their capacities, and the amount of their good works; or the number of their talents, and the manner in which they have improved them; for it is evident that each servant shall be rewarded or punished, not according to the number of talents merely with which he was favoured, but in proportion to the manner in which he improved or neglected to improve them,—

“Crown’d with righteousness, arise
Far above these nether skies.”

They shall participate, each one according as he has fulfilled his holy trust, “done good in his day and generation,” in all the glory peculiar to his allotment in the bright galaxy of the renovated firmament of the “new heavens,” and in this—

“New world, his truth to prove,
A world of righteousness and love.”

I said that these two truths, *salvation by grace,*

and the *reward by works*, not only harmonize together, but that they mutually support and defend each other. Thus, salvation from sin by grace fits the soul to bring forth good works. "Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good also." And as where there is good fruit on a tree, this fruit demonstrates that the tree is good ; so where good works are found in the actions of a professed Christian, they unequivocally prove, that the heart which produces them must be good also ; and where the heart is good, thence will proceed those good works which God will reward : and thus they reciprocally sustain and defend each other, and demonstrate the reality of the work of grace on the heart. Grace refines the soul, and the soul thus refined is adorned with the graces of the Holy Spirit, and the life is loaded with good works, and then these present an irrefutable argument in favour of the genuineness of the refining process of the Holy Spirit ; and all these together proclaim the goodness of God in thus redeeming the soul from sin, and thereby fitting it to bring forth the fruits of righteousness. Thus our poet teaches us to sing :—

" Meet it is, and just, and right,
That we should be wholly thine ;
In thy only will delight,
In thy blessed service join :

O that every *WORK* and *word*,
Might proclaim how good thou art ;
Holiness unto the Lord
Still be written on our heart."

It is grace, therefore, that qualifies the holy believer to bring forth these good works, these works of piety, and many which demonstrate to the world that a new creation has been formed in the heart, and that all the actions of the life now proceed from a hallowed motive; for the fountain whence proceed these streams of mercy with which Emmanuel's land is watered, and by which the souls and bodies of God's people are refreshed and invigorated, has been purified by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ; and hence, such as is the fountain, such are the streams, and such are their effects.

Now what a motive does this present to diligence in the improvement of our time and talent ! If every act of obedience performed with a pure motive is to be rewarded in heaven, should we not be extremely careful to fill up every niche of time in acts of piety to God and mercy to man ? And if the several degrees of glory are to be in proportion to the amount of good works performed, then it follows that the more we do and suffer in the cause of God, the brighter we shall shine in the kingdom of heaven. What floods of glory then shall burst forth upon the patri-

archs and prophets, and all those holy apostles, saints, and martyrs, who laboured and suffered in the cause of Christ, from age to age, and whose *works have followed* them to the bar of God ! I know not, indeed, but that all the consequences of their works will be reckoned in the amount. If so, then their reward will be increased in the same proportion as their words and actions shall continue to influence mankind ! How vast then will be the reward of those whose example is quoted from age to age, and whose good works stand recorded upon the page of history, as exemplifying the grace of God which sanctified their natures, and thereby rendered their works good and acceptable in the sight of God, and profitable to man ! How earnestly, therefore, should we pray, in the language of the poet,—

“ If so poor a worm as I
 May to thy great glory live,
 All my ACTIONS SANCTIFY,
 All my WORDS and thoughts receive,
 Claim me for thy SERVICE, claim
 ALL I HAVE, AND ALL I AM.”

Think not, my dear M., that because you love to be

“ little and unknown,
 Lov'd and priz'd by God alone,”

therefore that you will have little or no reward.

Your labours of love, springing from a loving heart, your many acts of hospitality shown to the servants of God, your many unostentatious gifts to the poor in your neighbourhood, your acts of benevolence to the institutions of the Church, your words of counsel to the ignorant—to the vicious, as well as the inquiring mind—and the crosses you bear for Christ's sake, as also the trials you endure from your relative position, shall be remembered by your heavenly Father, and will all meet with an ample reward at his hands in the last day, when "life is swallowed up of immortality." Let this then be your consolation, that "not a hair of your head shall fall to the ground without your heavenly Father's notice," and that every "cup of cold water," that is, every act of benevolence, however small or great, shall not "lose its reward," and Christ will say unto you, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of my disciples, ye have done it unto me." Yes, my dear M., you shall with all

"The saints in his presence receive
Their great and eternal REWARD;
In Jesus, in heaven, they live,—
They reign in the smile of their Lord.
The flame of angelical love
Is kindled at Jesus's face;
And all the enjoyment above
Consists in the rapturous gaze."

The thought expressed in these concluding words, suggests the nature of that happiness which the saints shall enjoy in heaven, which will be considered in the next letter, and therefore I shall conclude this by simply remarking, that all this reward of which I have spoken, originates not from the merits of the works performed, but from the grace of God in Christ Jesus, which led him to make a promise of bestowing it upon the faithful, persevering believer, with a view to stimulate him to diligence in every good word and work. Hence he says in the words of the same poet I have so frequently quoted,—

“Thou, Lord, on whom I still depend,
Shalt keep me faithful to the end :
I trust thy truth, and love, and power,
Shall save me till my latest hour ;
And when I lay this body down,
REWARD with an immortal crown.”

LETTER XXXI.

Beholding the glory of God a principal source of happiness—
Negative character of enjoyment—No pain, &c.—Wicked
cease from troubling—Positive character of it—Fulness of
joy—Recognise each other—Proved from Tupper—The author
anticipates the pleasure of recognising his friends—Poetry—
This pleasure shall never end—Increase of knowledge another
source of enjoyment—This evident to those who taste the
pleasure of knowledge—Saints shall raise the highest notes of
praise—Angels unite with them in songs of praise—Concludes
with poetry by Charles Wesley.

MY DEAR M——: No doubt that one portion
of the enjoyment of the saints in heaven will
consist in the glory which they shall inherit as a
reward of their good works. But this is not all,
and by no means the principal part of their hap-
piness. Its principal source will, doubtless, be
in beholding the glory of God as manifested in
Christ Jesus,—for then, and there, they shall
“see Him as He is.” We now “see through
a glass, darkly, but then face to face; now we
know in part, but then shall we know even as
we are known.” Those mysterious workings of
Divine providence which we could not compre-
hend in this world; the reasons and ends of
God’s dispensations, which were often hidden
from our view; and all those deep designs into
which we could not penetrate with our limited
perceptions, shall be fully unfolded, explained,

and made plain to us when we get home to glory.

One part of the happiness of the heavenly world will be of a negative character. There will be "no pain, nor sickness, nor death;" there "shall be no night there; nor shall they have any need of the sun, for the Lord God and the Lamb shall be the light" of that holy temple. The power and goodness of God shall forever have removed, through the process of the grave and the resurrection,—having first, in this life, purified their souls from the pollution of sin—all the causes of sickness, pain, and death; they shall never be permitted to infect that holy atmosphere, or to seize upon those raised and immortal bodies which will inhabit the New Jerusalem; and the glory of God will shine so resplendently as to banish all moral and natural darkness from that holy palace of

"Angels and of God."

So our poet teaches us to sing in that admirable hymn, which seems to have been composed with a bright anticipation of a joyful entrance into that heavenly world, where all is light and peace. Surely his soul must have expanded with a full and delightful view of the superlative happiness which awaited him on his

release from the bondage in which he was held in this life, when he penned those words of poetic melody and rapturous delight. Hear him, my dear M——, while he depicts in glowing colors, and in numbers so sweet and smooth as to charm the dulcet ears of even angels themselves, those ecstatic joys in which the saints shall participate at the right hand of God :—

“No need of the sun in that day
Which never is follow'd by night,
Where Jesus's beauties display
A pure and a permanent light :
The Lamb is their Light and their Sun,
And, lo ! by reflection they shine ;
With Jesus ineffably one,
And bright in effulgence divine.”

In the present life the righteous are often annoyed with the conduct of the wicked, with a tempting devil, and with the allurements of a vain and deceitful world. But there “the wicked cease from troubling ;” the devil shall have been “cast into the lake of fire ;” and all vanity and deceit shall be forever separated from those “new heavens and new earth.” These, with a thousand other nameless evils which “flesh is heir to,” shall be forever banished from our sight, being excluded from the New Jerusalem.

How beautifully is this all expressed in the following words of the poet !—

"Our mourning is all at an end,
When, raised by the life-giving Word,
We see the new city descend,
Adorn'd as a bride for her Lord :
The city so holy and clean,
No sorrow can breathe in the air ;
No gloom of affliction or sin ;
No shadow of evil is there."

But their enjoyment shall not be merely of a negative character. They shall have "fulness of joy, for at His right hand there are pleasures forever more." As I have already said, there is the pleasure of beholding God "without a dimming veil between," of being assimilated into the likeness of Jesus Christ, and participating in all the joys of the upper world—all those joys arising from perfect health of body and mind—a perfect supply of all our wants, and perfect union with all the redeemed of the Lord, and a never ending felicity in the beatitudes of heaven.

But shall we recognise each other in heaven ? Undoubtedly we shall. Is not this fully implied in those words of the Saviour, Luke xiii, 28, "When ye shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out ?" For if those who are summoned to the judgment-seat to be condemned are permitted to recognise those holy men of God, Abraham, Isaac, and

Jacob, and all the holy prophets, surely those associated with them in the kingdom of God will know them personally, and be able to distinguish one from the other. Yes: then “shall we know even as we are known;” and one part of our joy shall consist in the renewal of that holy fellowship which we enjoyed on earth, and recounting together those acts of Divine love which brought us safely through our trials, and made us “more than conquerors, through him that loved us.” How just and true, then, as well as exhilarating, are the words of the poet, when he says:—

“ I yearn for realms where fancy shall be filled, and the ecstasies
of freedom shall be felt,

And the soul reign gloriously, risen to its royal destinies.

I look to *recognise again* through the beautiful mask of their
perfection

The *dear familiar faces* I have *somewhere loved on earth*.

I long to *talk with grateful tongue* of storms and perils past,

And praise the mighty Pilot that hath steered us through the
rapids.

He shall be the form of it all; the very heart of gladness:

My soul is athirst for God—for God in man!”

These sentiments perfectly accord with the feelings and desires of every sanctified soul. All such feel that union one with another which makes them desire each other's society, and they delight even now to converse one with another, to mingle their souls together in mutual

acts of kindness. And surely they would be deprived of one source of the purest enjoyment in the heavenly world, were they denied the privilege of recognising each other there, of conversing together, and hailing one another blessed forever more. Hence those "dear, familiar faces," as the poet expresses it, will be recognised again when they meet on that eternal shore, and they shall more sweetly than ever interlock their affections, intermingle their souls, and interchange their sentiments of love and friendship, recount those mutual sorrows, afflictions, and trials, through which they had passed in this world, and all shall unite together in "praise to the mighty Pilot," in ascribing "honour and glory, power and dominion, to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever."

Allowing that the saints in heaven have a personal existence, as they unquestionably have, and especially at the resurrection have an identity of bodily appearance, I can see no possible reason why those who were acquainted with each other in this world, should not recognise each other in that; and thus heighten each other's enjoyment by mutual recognitions, mutual congratulations, and mutual interchanges of love for love, and joy for joy—with a perpetual

round of mutual pleasure, arising from the eternal sunshine of God's smiling countenance beaming upon them in the face of Jesus Christ. There parents will salute their children, husbands their wives, one friend will hail his other friend, and ministers will meet their flocks; while those who have been peculiarly blessed under their ministry, and who have been endeared to them by a thousand acts of kindness, and tender offices of friendship, will clasp each other in the arms with inexpressible delight, while they all bow together, and sing:—

“More than conquerors at last,
Here we* find our trials o'er;
We have all our sufferings past,
Hunger now and thirst no more.
No excessive heat we feel
From the sun's directer ray;
In a holier clime we dwell,
Region of eternal day.”

I certainly look forward with a delightful anticipation to that day when I shall have the unspeakable pleasure of hailing the numerous friends with whom I have been associated in the bonds of Christian fellowship—some of whom were converted under my ministry; and they and others were often strengthened an

* I have altered the *third* to the *first* person, to accommodate the language to the supposed circumstances.

comforted by the words God enabled me to speak—and comfort myself with the contemplation of spending an eternity with them in the paradise of God! This pleasant thought softens the bed of affliction, fills the heart with rapture, alleviates the pain of parting with those here in whose society I have often taken such exquisite delight. And therefore I comfort myself with the pleasing expectation of a re-union with those from whom I shall never—no, never be severed. Did not the poet feel something of this, when he penned those well-known, often-repeated, and often-sung—and sung too by holy souls with rapturous delight—words, which I give with the more pleasure, because I know that you, my dear M——, dwell upon them with a pleasing anticipation of one day realizing their complete fulfilment. I allude to the following:—

“O what are all my sufferings here,
 If, Lord, thou count me meet
 With that enraptur'd host 'to appear,
 And worship at thy feet!
 Give joy or grief, give ease or pain,
 Take life or friends away;
 But let me FIND THEM ALL AGAIN,
 In that ETERNAL DAY.”

Surely the poet blessed himself with the bright hope of finding his numerous “friends again in that eternal day!” And may we not

participate with him in this desire and expectation? We may—we do;—for I know that your holy heart beats high in the well-grounded hope of a re-union in “that bright world above” with those whom you have loved on earth; and I certainly have a kindred feeling in my poor heart, that, however unworthy, I may be permitted to renew my friendship, and to connect my fellowship with all those with whom my heart has been united in the bonds of Christian love, in an eternity of reciprocal acts of kindness, and mingle with them around the throne of God.

An eternity thus enjoyed! O the transporting word! In this imperfect state of being, our pleasures are often interrupted by pains, our happiness by misery, and our most exquisite enjoyments are transitory in their nature—they all must soon terminate; but in that world of bliss to which the saints are hastening, there is not only universal delight—it shall never be interrupted by a fear that it will end; it shall continually roll on, wave after wave, swelling as it rolls, to all eternity! This is enough, and therefore no words can make it appear more lasting than is included in that word, ETERNITY!

“ Strangers and pilgrims here below,
This earth, we know, is not our place ;

But hasten through the vale of woe,
And, restless to behold thy face,
Swift to our heavenly country move,
OUR EVERLASTING HOME ABOVE."

Another source of enjoyment shall be the perpetual increase of our knowledge. In this world our knowledge, at best, is imperfect. We are often deceived through the fallibility of our judgment—liable to imposition by the stratagems of others, through false appearances, and by a thousand other hallucinations that are continually playing around our imaginations, and tempting us to yield our understanding and heart to their exclusive sway; so that even when we arrive at truth we seem to hold it with a trembling hand, fearing it may slip from us before we are aware of it. Though, therefore, we may be so far successful as to find the truth, how little of it do we know! We are often compelled to dwell upon the surface of things, without being able to dive into their depths, to scan their essences, or to comprehend those secret laws by which the world is sustained, governed, and kept in perpetual motion. Hence, as the apostle expresses it, "We know but in part." We know, indeed, that we exist, that the world exists around us, because we see it, and all those self-evident truths with which

we are surrounded ; but how little do we know of the internal structure of our bodies, of the powers of our minds, of those mysterious laws which bind them together ; and how much less still do we know of that curious mechanism by which the world is held together, and each planet and system is made to keep its place and move around continually in its respective orbit ?

But in that bright world, all those impediments to the ascertainment of truth being removed, we shall see things clearly—all will appear as it is ; and though we may not be able to discover the whole field of vision at once, yet we shall be ever ranging through it with increasing delight, while God will unfold to our ravished vision, new, and ever-varying beauties, of his “eternal power and Godhead,” as displayed in his magnificent works. With this prospect before him, the poet expresses himself in the following delightful strains :—

“ I long to behold Him array’d
With glory and light from above ;
The King in his beauty display’d,—
His beauty of holiest love :
I languish and sigh to be there,
Where Jesus hath fix’d his abode ;
O when shall we meet in the air,
And fly to the mountain of God !”

And in the prospect of eternally dwelling on

that happy shore, with his vision of knowledge immeasurably enlarged, he breaks out in the following language :—

“ With him I on Zion shall stand,
For Jesus hath spoken the word ;
The BREADTH of *Immanuel's land*
SURVEY by the *light of my Lord.*”

To those who can testify by their own experience to the pleasure which every new discovery of truth affords to the mind even here, I need say nothing to convince them of the exquisite delight that this ever-increasing, ever-unfolding, and ever-expanding “ breadth of Immanuel's land ” shall impart to those redeemed and saved souls who shall be perpetually “ surveying it in the light of the Lord.” O the transport ! O the fulness of that joy with which their souls will be ravished to all eternity ! O, my dear M——, does not this anticipation fill your soul with an overwhelming sense of the goodness of that God who hath redeemed you, and washed you in the blood of the Lamb ? To think that we shall be permitted to gaze upon the beauties of God in Christ ; to turn this way and that, and at every turn meet an object that we love ; to have some new truth in all its uncreated beauties presented to us ; and thus we shall pass from truth to truth, from one scene of beauty to

another, and that to all eternity! Is not this enough to fill the soul with ecstatic delight, and make us cry out in those poetical strains with which the pen of Charles Wesley moved, while his holy heart dictated the following words?

“ Away with our sorrow and fear,
We soon shall recover our home ;
The city of saints shall appear,—
The day of eternity come.
From earth we shall quickly remove,
And mount to our native abode ;
The house of our Father above,—
The palace of angels and God.”

I know not how to quit this theme ; it is so glorious, so ravishing to the soul! As Tupper expresses it,—

“ Thou shalt drink, and deeply, filling the mind with marvels ;
Thou shalt watch no more, lingering, disappointed of thy hope ;
Thou shalt roam where road is none, a traveller untrammelled,
Speeding at a wish, emancipate, to where the stars are seen.”

Yes ; from that river, exhaustless as its Fountain, shall forever flow those streams, not only of Divine joy, but of endless knowledge, which shall fill the soul with the purest pleasure and the most ecstatic delight.

But who shall swell the highest note of praise ? I know that the angels are represented as being nearest the throne, but they are only as servants of the redeemed, who were before sent to “ minister unto the heirs of salvation,” and now join in the general acclamation of giving glory to

God for having washed the saints in the blood of the Lamb, and clothed them in robes white and clean, that these might appear without spot or wrinkle, "adorned as a bride to meet her bridegroom." While, therefore, the angels unite with the saints in ascribing honour and glory to God, the latter shall far exceed the former in raising their notes of praise for the wonders of redeeming love, and in shouting forth their loud hallelujahs to God and the Lamb forever and ever; because they have *tasted* of redeeming and sanctifying love, and have been made partakers of His great salvation, and have passed through the fire of affliction unhurt, thoroughly purified from all their sins; and therefore they shall sing a song of praise that does not belong to the angels, and cannot be adopted by them, but shall be sung exclusively by those that have been thus "redeemed from the earth." But they shall both unite in ascribing the honour and glory to Jesus Christ, in whom the Godhead's rays are concentrated, and from whom they are radiated forth in every direction, and overshadow the whole heavenly host as with a cloud of glory. Take from heaven this supreme object of love, worship, and adoration, and heaven itself would be emptied of its glory, and its inhabitants would lack a common centre of

praise, and would, methinks, mournfully inquire, Where is He "that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father?" But while they look up and behold Him seated upon the throne, a thrill of joy runs through their hearts, and they all, angels and saints, unite in one common anthem of praise, "Saying, Amen: blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God forever," and all heaven resounds. "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, shall lead them to living fountains of water," of which they shall drink, and never thirst again. To HIM BE, therefore, GLORY FOREVER AND EVER.

This is in exact accordance with our own poet, whom I have so often quoted, and whose poetry is so conformable to the language of truth, that it cannot be appealed to with too much frequency. Hear him in the following flowing numbers:—

"Angel powers the throne surround ;
Next the saints in glory they ;
Lull'd with the transporting sound,
They their silent homage pay :
Prostrate on their face, before
God and his Messiah fall ;
Then in hymns of praise adore,—
SHOUT THE LAMB THAT DIED FOR ALL!"

O may you, my dear M., and I, and all who read these lines, together with all who profess the name of Christ, so live, that we may all join in the general chorus of

“ Be it so, we all reply :
Him let all our orders praise ;
Him that did for sinners die,
Saviour of the favour'd race !
Render we our God his right,
Glory, wisdom, thanks, and power,
Honour, majesty, and might,
Praise Him, praise Him evermore !”

To this your full heart cries, *Amen*, and my heart echoes back the loud assent, while we unitedly proclaim—

“ Rais'd by the breath of love divine,
We urge our way, with strength renew'd ;
The church of the first-born to join,
We travel to the mount of God :
With joy upon our heads arise,
And meet our Saviour in the skies.”

THE END.

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